INTERESTING HISTORICAL EVENTS,

Relative to the

PROVINCES of BENGAL,

AND THE

EMPIRE of INDOSTAN,

WITH

A Seasonable HINT and PERSWASIVE

To the Honourable

The COURT of DIRECTORS of the

EAST INDIA COMPANY.

AS ALSO

The MYTHOLOGY and COSMOGONY, FASTS and FESTIVALS of the GENTOOS, followers of the SHASTA;

AND

A DISSERTATION on the METEMPSYCHOSIS, commonly, though erroneously, called the PYTHAGOREAN Doctrine.

By J. Z. HOLWELL, Esq;

PART I.

LONDON:
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, near Surry Street, in the Strand. MDCCLXV.

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WITH
A Seasonable Hint and Preservative

PART the SECOND and Last will be speedily published.

MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

AND

A DISSERTATION on the METEMPSYCHOSIS, commonly, though erroneously, called the PYTHAGOREAN Doctrine.

By J. ZEPHANIAH HOLWELL, Esq;

PART I.

LONDON:

Printed for T. Becket and P. A. De Hondt, near Surry-Stairs, in the Strand. MDCCLXV.

DEDICATION.

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES TOWNSEND, Esq;

SIR,

LAST year you indulged me with an opportunity of communicating to you, some anecdotes (little known) relative to the Mogul Empire, and the state of our *East India* trade;—in the course of that conference, you manifested to me such profound penetration, and such a ready comprehension of these subjects, that I could not resist cherishing a desire, to submit to the public my future labors on these interesting matters, under the auspices of

your name. I lately intimated that wish and intention, when you moſt obligingly and politely favored me, with your permiſſion to dedicate to you *this Firſt Part* of the Work, which at preſent employs my leiſure hours: I now avail myſelf of the licence you have honoured me with, and beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf, with true reſpect

SIR,

Your moſt obliged
and moſt obedient
humble ſervant,

Mount Felix in Surry,
Auguſt 21ſt, 1765.

J. Z. HOLWELL.

TO THE PUBLIC.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

WHEN a man excited by an irreſiſtable and laudable impulſe for the good of his country, *firſt ſpeaks* before an Auguſt Aſſembly; he feels a certain kind of dread, awe, and trepidation, which he finds himſelf unable immediately to conquer; eſpecially if he has not been much uſed to ſpeak in public, or perchance poſſeſſes ſome ſhare of modeſty in his compoſition.—Thus, I conceive, it fares with every conſiderate author, on his firſt appearance before that *Auguſt Aſſembly* THE PUBLIC.

In this plight I felt myſelf in the year 1758, when I exhibited to you a ſcene of

unparalleled horror and diſtreſs, which I judged not unworthy a place in our annals; ——juſtice and the neceſſity of the times lately urged my ſecond appearance, and obliged me to draw my pen in defence of injured worth and character: but now, by uſe and indulgence grown bolder, (a very common caſe) I preſent myſelf before you of my own voluntary choice.

Independency, and a pleaſing retirement, however *delectable* in themſelves, have yet their ſeaſons of *vacancy* and *leiſure*, that may want filling up.—And happy! ought that man to eſteem himſelf, who can employ thoſe *voids* and *blanks* in time to the emolument, or even literary amuſement of mankind.

Such is my ſituation, and ſuch are my motives, for taking up the pen again; motives, ſo laudable in themſelves, will, I truſt, engage the candor and indulgence of my readers for any defects in the following performance.

The *Eaſt-Indies*, and particularly *Bengall*, are now become ſo important an object and concern to *Great-Britain*, that every elucidation thereof, muſt I think be acceptable, that

that is founded on facts, juſt obſervations, and faithful recitals.

Through a courſe of thirty years reſidence in *Bengall*, my leiſure hours were employed in collecting materials relative to the tranſactions, revolutions and occurrences of that invaluable country, and the religious tenets of its inhabitants, natives of *Indoſtan*; which I flattered myſelf, when reduced to form and order, might prove worthy your attention.

It is well known that at the capture of *Calcutta*, A. D. 1756, I loſt many curious *Gentoo* manuſcripts, and among them two very correct and valuable copies of the *Gentoo Shaſtah*. They were procured by me with ſo much trouble and expence; that even the commiſſioners of reſtitution, though not at all diſpoſed to favor me, allowed me two thouſand *Madras* rupees in recompence for this particular loſs; but the moſt irreparable damage I ſuffered under this head of grievances, was a tranſlation I made of a conſiderable part of the *Shaſtah*, which had coſt me eighteen months hard labor: as that work opened upon me, I diſtinctly ſaw, that the *Mythology*, as well as the *Coſmogony* of the *Egyptians*, *Greeks* and *Romans*, were borrowed from

the doctrines of the *Bramins*, contained in this book, even to the copying their exteriors of worſhip, and the diſtribution of their idols, though groſsly mutilated and adulterated. But more of this in the courſe of my preſent work.

I ſhould in the compaſs of one year more, with the cloſe application, I intended beſtowing on it, have accompliſhed a complete tranſlation of the whole *Shaſtah*, that would I flattered myſelf have been a valuable acquiſition to the learned world, had not the fatal cataſtrophe of fifty-ſix put it totally out of my power ever to attempt it again.

From that change in our affairs abroad, a new chain of purſuits engroſſed my time and attention, ſo that I could no longer devote either, to the ſtudies I had before ſo much at heart—however, during the laſt eight months of my reſidence in *Bengall*, being freed from the plagues of government, (thanks to my *very honourable maſters* for it) I reaſſumed my reſearches with tolerable ſucceſs, which joined to ſome manuſcripts recovered by an unforeſeen and extraordinary event (that poſſibly I may hereafter recite) enables me to undertake the taſk I now aſſign myſelf.

It

It is true I intended a much nobler entertainment for my readers; but as that is now irrecoverably beyond my reach, without once more doubling the *Cape of Good Hope*, (to which I feel not the leaſt inclination) we muſt content ourſelves with the homely fare we have before us, ranged in the beſt manner our ſtraitened circumſtances will admit of—as it is eſſentially neceſſary at this intereſting period, that we ſhould be able to form ſome clearer ideas of a people, with whom we have had ſuch important tranſactions, and of whom ſo little is truely known *.

Having ſtudiouſly peruſed all that has been written of the empire of *Indoſtan*, both as to its ancient, as well as more modern ſtate; as alſo the various accounts tranſmitted to us, by authors in almoſt all ages (from *Arrian*, down to the *Abbé de Guyon*) concerning the *Hindoos*, and the religious tenets of the *Bramins*, I venture to pronounce them all very defective, fallacious, and unſatisfactory to an inquiſitive ſearcher after truth, and only tend to convey a very imperfect and unjuſt ſem-

* Here I would be underſtood to mean the *Gentoos* only, now laboring under *Mahometan* tyranny, but fated, I hope, ſoon to feel the bleſſings of a mild *Britiſh* government.

blance of a people, who from the earlieſt times have been an ornament to the creation—if ſo much can with propriety be ſaid of any known people upon earth.

All the modern writers repreſent the *Hindoos* as a race of ſtupid and groſs *Idolaters*: from the ancients indeed theſe people met with better treatment; although they too as well as the others were equally ignorant in the ſubjects they treated of.

The modern authors who have wrote on the principles and worſhip of the *Hindoos*, are chiefly of the *Romiſh* communion, therefore we need wonder the leſs that they (from a ſuperſtitious zeal inſeparable from that communion) ſhould depreciate and traduce the mythology of the venerable ancient *Bramins*, on ſo ſlender a foundation as a few inſignificant literal tranſlations of the *Viedam*, and theſe not made from the book itſelf, but from unconnected ſcraps and bits, picked up here and there by hear-ſay from *Hindoos*, probably as ignorant as themſelves.

From ſuch weak grounds and evidence as this, and by the help of a few exhibitions of the *Hindoos*, *ſeemingly* monſtrous idols, the *Popiſh* authors heſitate not to ſtigmatize

ſtigmatize thoſe moſt venerable ſages the *Bramins*, as having inſtituted doctrines and worſhip, which if believed, would reduce them below the level of the brute creation, as every reader muſt have obſerved, who has miſſpent his time in the peruſal of them; in the way of their proper calling and function, they were however right; as having been appointed to propagate their own ſyſtem of theology abroad; though ſtrictly ſpeaking, their own tenets were more idolatrous than the ſyſtem they travelled ſo far to arraign. On this miſtaken method and falſe zeal of propagating *any faith* at *any rate*, I beg to be indulged in making the following general reflections, which naturally ariſe from the ſubject before us.

That ignorance, ſuperſtition and partiality to ourſelves, are too commonly the cauſe of preſumption and contempt of others—thoſe whoſe knowledge of ſtates and kingdoms extends no further than the limits of their native land, often imagine all beyond it ſcarce worth their thoughts, or at leaſt greatly inferior in compariſon with their own; a concluſion natural, though unjuſt——If from clime and country we proceed to individuals, we ſhall ſee the ſame unwarrantable prepoſſeſſion and preference to ſelf

take place; and proceeding ſtill further in our reflections, we may obſerve the ſame confined way of thinking and judging, leads the multitude (and I wiſh I could ſay the multitude only) of every nation and ſect, to arraign and have in utter deteſtation and contempt, the religious principles and worſhip of all that happen to be out of the pale of their own church or mode of faith.

That every nation and *ſect* ſhould have a high and even ſuperior opinion of the religious principles, under which they were born and educated, is extremely natural and juſt, provided they do not from an intemperate zeal or religious vanity (now ſo much the faſhion) preſume to condemn, depreciate or invade the religious principles of others—this condemning ſpirit can proceed only from one of the three following cauſes, a defect in underſtanding, a want of knowledge of the world (in men and things) or a bad (and reſtleſs) heart. The ſalvation of mankind, ſo much pretended, has no place in the hearts or labors of theſe zealots, or they would not go about ſeeking whom they can confound in ſpirit, deſtroying the peace and tranquillity of their *poor* fellow chriſtians.

Men

Men who have been converſant with foreign countries, and made proper and benevolent remarks on the manners and principles of their inhabitants, will not deſpiſe or condemn the different ways by which they approach the *Deity*, but revere it ſtill as a divine worſhip, though they may piouſly lament it deviates ſo much from their own.

To reſcue diſtant nations from the groſs conceptions entertained of them by the multitude, of all other perſuaſions, is the true buſineſs and indiſpenſable duty of a *Traveller*; or elſe his travels and remarks, can only amuſe his readers, without conveying to them any uſeful inſtruction or ſolid ſatisfaction.

A meer deſcription of the exterior manners and religion of a people, will no more give us a true idea of them, than a geographical deſcription of a country, can convey a juſt conception of their laws and government; the traveller muſt ſink deeper in his reſearches, would he feaſt the mind of an underſtanding reader.—His telling us ſuch and ſuch a people, in the *Eaſt* or *Weſt-Indies*, worſhip this ſtock, or that ſtone, or monſtrous idol; only ſerves to reduce in

our

our eſteem, our fellow creatures, to the moſt abject and deſpicable point of light. Whereas, was he ſkilled in the language of the people he deſcribes, ſufficiently to trace the etymology of their words and phraſes, and capable of diving into the myſteries of their theology, he would probably be able to evince us, that ſuch ſeemingly prepoſterous worſhip, had the moſt ſublime rational ſource and foundation.

The traveller, who without theſe eſſential requiſites, (as well as induſtry and a clear underſtanding) pretends to deſcribe and fix the religious tenets of any nation whatever, diſhoneſtly impoſes his own reveries on the world, and does the greateſt injury and violence to letters, and the cauſe of humanity—How far the productions of moſt travellers may juſtly fall under this cenſure, I ſubmit to the public.

To the want of this attention and capacity in the traveller, we may aſcribe in a great meaſure, the deſpicable, and I dare ſay unworthy notions, we too aptly entertain of moſt nations very remote from us; whereas were we better informed, we ſhould find our minds opened, our underſtandings enlarged, and ourſelves in-

ſpired

ſpired with that benevolence for our ſpecies, without which the human form becomes rather a diſgrace than ornament.

I am ſorry to ſay, that in general the accounts publiſhed of the manners and religious principles of *the Eaſt and Weſt-Indies*, have been in the light and ſuperficial way before objected to: but as my knowledge extends only to the former, I ſhall confine my remarks to them; and endeavor to extricate them in ſome degree from the groſs abſurdities we have conceived of them: confeſſing myſelf amazed that we ſhould ſo readily believe the people of *Indoſtan* a race of ſtupid *Idolators*, when to our coſts, in a political and commercial view, we have found them ſuperior to us.

Having tranſiently mentioned the *Vedam* and *Shaſtah*, (the *Gentoos ſcriptures*) it is neceſſary I ſhould inform you—The book firſt named, is followed by the *Gentoos* of the *Mallabar* and *Cormandel* coaſts, and alſo of the Iſland of *Ceylon*.—The *Shaſtah* is followed by the *Gentoos* of the provinces of *Bengall*, and by all the *Gentoos* of the reſt of *India*, commonly called *India proper*; that is to ſay—the greateſt

part

part of *Oriſſa*, *Bengall proper*, *Bahar*, *Banaras*, *Oud*, *Eleabas*, *Agra*, *Delhy*, &c. all along the courſe of the rivers *Ganges* and *Jumna* to the *Indus*.

Both theſe books contain the inſtitutes of their reſpective religions and worſhips, as well as the hiſtory of their ancient *Rajahs* and princes; often couched under allegory and fable; their antiquity is contended for by the partiſans of each—but the ſimilitude of their *names*, *idols*, and great part of their worſhip, leaves little room to doubt, nay plainly evinces, that both theſe ſcriptures were originally *one*.—And if we compare the great purity and chaſte manners of the *Shaſtah*, with the great abſurdities and impurities of the *Viedam*; we need not heſitate to pronounce, the *latter* a *corruption* of the former.—All that I need add here, is, that my remarks follow the *Shaſtah* only.

Taſte in reading differs as much as in the choice of viands; what proves a delicious morſel to one, is diſguſtful to another. I was never invited to a feaſt in my life, that I did not regret the abſence of a bill of fare:—Therefore to ſave you from this difficulty, I here preſent you a liſt of what

is

is provided for your entertainment in the following ſheets, in eight courſes; ſo that if your ſtomach does not ſtimulate you to taſte the whole, you will be enabled to fall to, on that diſh which may beſt ſuit your appetite.

I. General head.——A ſhort hiſtory of the ſucceſſion to the empire of *Indoſtan*, from *Aurenge Zebe* to *Mahomet Shaw*.—This ſubject has been already touched upon by my ingenious friend Mr. *James Fraſer*, but being foreign to his more immediate concern (*the invaſion of* Nadir Shaw) he has touched it ſo ſlightly, as to convey a very imperfect idea of the *circumſtances* attending the many aſtoniſhing changes that happened in this ſhort and memorable period. Theſe particulars I was favored with at *Patna*, *A. D.* 1733, by a ſenſible *Armenian*, who reſided alternately at *Agra* and *Delhy*, in a civil poſt of ſome truſt, under the emperors during the courſe of theſe tranſactions.

II. Tranſactions in the ſubahdaary of *Bengall*, from the period that *Jaffier Khan* ruled theſe provinces, to the uſurpation of the government by *Aliverdi Khan*, with the extraordinary circumſtances attending the

the riſe of this laſt mentioned *Soubah*, and his brother *Hadjee Hamet* *.

III. A ſummary account of the provinces of *Bengall*, (properly ſo called) it's principal towns, their bearings and diſtance from each other, and from *Calcutta*, with an eſtimate of their revenues, and a ſeaſonable

* The world has been already treated with this part of my ſubject, by a gentleman in his lucubrations, printed in *Edinburgh* 1761, under the title of, *Reflections on the government of* Indoſtan, *and a ſhort ſketch of the hiſtory of* Bengall, *from the year* 1739, *to* 1756. This little piece fell into my hands, about a year and a half after it was printed.—On peruſing it, I could not avoid being ſurprized at finding *The author's* "Short "ſketch, &c." was taken from part of *the manuſcripts* herein before-mentioned, and makes from page 33 to 50, of his ſecond epiſtle.—Theſe manuſcripts were penned by me in the year 1750, in my paſſage to *Europe*, from materials collected abroad. I communicated them during my ſhort ſtay in *England*, to my friends, Sir *William Baker*, Mr. *Mabbot*, Mr. *R. Drake*, Mr. *Davis* and Doctor *Campbell*.—The original was loſt at the capture of *Calcutta*, but after my ſecond return in 1757, I learnt a copy had been taken of it without my knowledge, by a gentleman to whom I lent it abroad—from this copy I was permitted to take another. How *the author* of the Reflections came by it, he beſt knows.—He honors me in tranſcribing from it, but he would have honored himſelf more, had he acknowledged from whence he took it, and had not taken ſuch fruitleſs pains to diſguiſe his (yet obvious) plagiariſm, by mangling, maiming and curtailing my ſubjects in the manner I conceive he has done.

and

and perſwaſive hint to the gentlemen in the *Eaſt-India* direction.

IV. A ſummary view of the *fundamental* religious tenets of the *Gentoo's* followers of the *Shaſtah*.

V. A ſhort account from the *Shaſtah* of the creation of the *worlds*, or univerſe.

VI. The *Gentoo* manner of computing time, and their conceptions touching the *age of the worlds*, and the period of their diſſolution.

VII. An account and explanation of the *Gentoo* faſts and feſtivals, with a repreſentation of their grand feaſt of the *Drugah*, compriſing a view of their principal idols, and the genealogy of their *ſubordinate deities*.——If the faſts and feſtivals of any nation are clearly underſtood, there wants little more to convey to us a diſtinct idea of their religious principles; the *one*, being the only true criterion of the *other*.

VIII. A diſſertation on the *Gentoo* doctrine of the *metempſycoſis*; improperly called *Pythagorean*, by all who have wrote on this ſubject, hitherto ſo little underſtood.

Having

Having thus set forth my real motives for taking up the pen again, and opened the plan of my intended work; I shall here close this preliminary discourse: the favorable acceptance of my labors, by the candid public, is all the recompence hoped, or wished for, by their

Obedient humble servant,

J. Z. HOLWELL.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The ſucceſſion of the Mogull *Emperors from* Auring Zebe.

WHOEVER has attentively peruſed the hiſtories of the riſe of ſtates and kingdoms, muſt have made this melancholy obſervation; that the approaches to uſurped royalty, dominion and power, are *generally* founded, in the firſt inſtance, on the ſubduction of every virtue from the human breaſt: as, the ſacred tyes of juſtice, affinity, gratitude and *true* benevolence. A few exceptions may poſſibly ſubſiſt in the courſe of many thouſand years, againſt our concluſion; but they are ſo *very few*, that we think they cannot in the leaſt invalidate our general aſſertion.

The glittering proſpects of a crown, ſo dazzle and dim the *eye* of cool reflection and reaſon, that it becomes *blind* to every other conſideration of humanity.

Ambition, or a reſtleſs thirſt after power and dominion, has ever been the *bane* of the civil rights and liberties of mankind; and ſeems to be a paſſion implanted in the original nature and conſtruction of man:—if otherwiſe, his conduct is wholly unaccountable; for we ſee that every individual of the ſpecies, in every rank and degree, is graſping and labouring to poſſeſs that which every individual is ſo materially concerned to prevent; *neither* of them adverting to this invariable truth: That *he* who invades the liberty, rights and property of *another*, gives, at the ſame time, a leſſon and juſt cauſe for diſpoſſeſſing *himſelf*.—Why this eternal warfare and contention for dominion between man and man, collectively or ſeparately, (from his creation to this hour) was originally implanted in him, we may, in a future diſſertation, attempt to ſolve; here we will only lament, that ſo it undeniably is.

The miſerable effects of this fatal paſſion, for *rule* is no where more ſtrongly exemplify'd, than in the ſhort recital we are going to make of the ſucceſſors of *Auring Zebe* to the throne of *Indoſtan*; to which he himſelf did not arrive without wading through a ſea of blood, and a continued chain of almoſt unparallel'd religious fraud,

per-

perfidy and cruelty, leaving on record a flagrant proof, That no ties, however sacred, can resist, or come in competition with, the charms of royalty. His bloody example was very exactly copied by his descendants.

Auring Zebe deceasing the 21st of *February* 1707, was succeeded in the throne by his second son *Mahommed Mauzm*; for, notwithstanding the positive injunction in *Auring Zebe*'s last Will, in favour of his son *Mahommed Azem Shaw*, *Mahommed Mauzm* adopting the successful example of his father, disputed the crown with his elder brother, who, in battle near *Agra*, was defeated and killed. *Mahommed Mauzm* was immediately proclaimed Emperor, and assumed (amongst other titles mentioned by Mr. *Fraser*) the title of *Shaw Allum, King of the World*. I have, in my collection, two gold Mohurs struck in this Emperor's Reign, *Anno* 1709, and 1711; on the first was impressed *Shaw Allum*; on the other, *Bahadr Shaw, The Valiant King*; which title he was latterly fondest of. *Anno* 1707. *Auring Zebe.*

His reign, though extended to the term of six years, was unhappy and turbulent. The fortune of war gave him the succession to his father's dominions, but he succeeded

not to his capacity and fame; perplexed
Shaw Allum. with the reſtleſs ambition of his *four ſons*, who in his life time ſhewed themſelves competitors for his crown, he died of diſcontent and grief, *Anno* 1713.

His four ſons were, *Mauz O'din*, *Mahommed Azim*, *Raffeeil al Kaddr*, and *Khejiſta*
Anno 1713. *Akhter*; they had been ſome years Governors of diſtinct provinces, and were each, at the death of their father, at the head of a puiſſant army to ſupport their ſeveral pretenſions to the throne.

Mahommed Azim, being ſuperior in force, wealth, and reputation, to the other three brothers, they joined in league againſt him, taking the moſt ſolemn oath on *Khoran*, to be faithful to each other, and to ſubmit to an equal partition of the Empire in thirds, as ſoon as they ſhould defeat and ſucceed againſt their brother.

In conſequence of this compact, the three brothers united their reſpective armies, a general battle enſued; in the firſt heat of which, *Mahommed Azim* was killed by the ſhot of an arrow, as he was gallantly charg-
Anno 1714. ing on his elephant the center of his brothers army, which he was informed was com-

commanded in perſon by his eldeſt brother *Mauz O'din*.

The treaſures of *Mahommed Azim*, by the dexterity of *Zulfecar Khan*, an Omrah in the intereſt of *Mauz O'din*, fell into the hands of the latter, with which having privately bought over moſt of the troops of his two remaining brothers, he attacked them on the field of battle, in violation of his ſolemn oath.

The brothers being no ways prepared for this ſudden, unſuſpected and perfidious ſtroke, were capable of making but ſmall reſiſtance; the elder of the two *Raffeeil al Kaddr*, was preſently killed, and what is worthy remark, fell upon the body of his brother *Muhammed Azim*; *Khojiſta Akbter*, the youngeſt of the four, collecting ſome few of his own and *Raffeeil al Kaddr's* troops, fled towards the province of *Deccan* his government, but being purſued and attacked by *Mauz O'din*, ſhared the ſame fate with his brothers.

Thus *Mauz O'din* became, like his father and grandfather, poſſeſſed of the throne of *Indoſtan*, by the perfidious deſtruction of his brothers; one circumſtance however might be pleaded in behalf of *Mauz O'din*,

When *Furrukhsir* first received advice of *Shaw Allum*'s death, and the fatal catastrophe of his father and uncles, he withdrew from *Dacca*, knowing his uncle, *Jehandar*, would never think himself secure on the throne, whilst so near a pretender to it was in being. Much perplexed, and irresolute what course to take, as he was at the head of an inconsiderate, but faithful body of horse, retiring out of the province, he was met by express messengers from the revolters, urging his immediate advance to *Patna* in the province of *Babaar*, where on his arrival he was received by *Seyd Hassan Aly Khan*, *Seyd Abdallah Khan*, and other principal Omrahs and officers, who instantly proclaimed him Emperor of *Indostan*.

On the first news of this revolt and competitor, the court was struck with a panick; but the Emperor, buried in the embraces of his beloved *Loll Kooree*, treated it as an impotent attempt hardly worth his notice, contenting himself with sending his son *Eas O'din*, at the head of 15000 horse, to suppress him, with orders to bring the traitor's head.

Express after express arriving with intelligence that *Furrukhsir*'s party gained strength

ſtrength every hour, and that he was in full march towards *Agra*, the Emperor re-inforced his ſon with a large body of troops, under the joint command of his Vizir *Zulfecar Khan*, and his favourite *Gokuldas Khan*, between whom there ſubſiſted much private jealouſy and enmity.

Furrukhsir had by this time drawn together a reſpectable army, and thought himſelf ſtrong enough to quit *Patna*, which he accordingly did, and by forced marches advanced as far as *Chivahram* in the province of *Elhabas*, where he was met by *Eas O'din*, at the head of his 15000 horſe. This young Prince after a ſhort conteſt, perceiving the ſuperiority of the enemy's forces, thought it adviſeable to retreat towards *Agra*, which he did in good order; and in a few days was joined near *Agra* by the troops, ſent by the Emperor under the command of the Vizir and *Gokuldas Khan*, to reinforce them: here it was reſolved to wait the approach of the enemy, for which they did not wait long, and a general battle quickly enſued. *Anno* 1715.

The Emperor's forces, by the advice of *Zulfecar Khan*, was formed into three diviſions; The center was commanded by *Eas*

Eas O'din; the right by *Gaholdat Khan*; and the left by *Zulfecar Khan*.

Furrukhsir observed the like division of his forces. He gave the command of his center division to *Seyd Hoſſen Aly Khan*; the right to *Seyd Abdallah Khan*; and led on the left himſelf; preferring this as the poſt of the greateſt honor, becauſe it was the poſt of greateſt danger, as being oppoſed to *Gaudar Khan*, who commanded the right diviſion of the Emperor's forces, and was juſtly eſteemed the moſt conſummate general and intrepid ſoldier in the Empire.

Mr. *Fraſer* in his ſhort narrative intimates, that the Emperor was in perſon in this engagement, but herein his intelligence deceived him; for it is a known fact, that he was never roused ſo far from the lethargic pleaſures he was immerſed in, as once to quit the Seraglio; and indeed the flattering falſe informations that were hourly conveyed to him of the defeat of the rebels, by *Loll Kooree* (who dreaded his abſence) prevented his ever beſtowing a thought that way, until it was too late to think of it to any purpoſe. But to reſume our ſubject.

The

The battle was fought with great obſtinacy and gallantry on both ſides.—Wonders are recorded of the ſpirited actions and perſonal bravery of *Eas O'din* and *Gokuldas Khan*, and not leſs reported of the valour of *Furrukhsir* and *Seyd Hoſſan Aly Khan*; but the deciſive ſtroke of victory was given by *Seyd Abdallah Khan*; this General, obſerving the Vizir draw off and retire with his diviſion, wheeled and vigorouſly attacked *Eas O'din* in flank, whilſt he was hard preſſed in front by *Seyd Hoſſan Aly Khan*. *Eas O'din* at the ſame time learning that the brave *Gokuldas Khan* was killed, and his right wing defeated by *Furrukhsir*, a general rout ſoon followed.—*Eas O'din* eſcaped with difficulty from the battle, and by a change of ſwift horſes reached *Delhy*, where in the preſence of his father, he in an hour died of his wounds.

Furrukhsir prudently ordered the troops to be ſpared in the purſuit. This clemency, and the addreſſes of ſome emiſſaries ſent amongſt them, operated ſo ſtrongly on them, that to a man they revolted from the Emperor, and joined *Furrukhsir*; whoſe triumph, on this happy ſucceſs, was greatly abated by the abſence and ſuppoſed death of *Seyd Hoſſan Aly Khan*. Short ſighted mortal! little didſt thou at that time know,

that

that thou wert regretting the loſs and life of the man, who in a very ſhort period would deprive thee of thy own!——a large reward being promiſed by the Prince, and ſearch being made, *Seyd Hoſſan Aly Khan* was found amongſt the ſlain with ſigns of life, and his recovery effected.

The treacherous conduct of the Vizir *Zulfecar Khan*, it was ſaid, proceeded from cowardice, and reſentment at *Gokuldas Khan* being joined in the command with him (a ſource from which the greateſt deſigns have often proved abortive.) When he retired with his diviſion he made the beſt of his way to *Dilly*, where ſoon after, the arrival of the unfortunate *Eas O'din*, too plainly ſpoke the deſtiny of the Emperor his Father.

Some feeble attempts were made to raiſe freſh troops, and put the city in a poſture of defence; but the ſudden approach of *Furrukhſir* put a period to every hope. The Emperor, his uncle, fell into his hands without reſiſtance. His head was immediately cut off, and his trunk being fixed upon an elephant, was expoſed round the city. His Vizir, *Zulfecar Khan*, was tied by the feet to the tail of the ſame elephant, and dragged until he expired: a death cruel, and

and esteemed the most dishonorable that can be inflicted upon a criminal; but hardly adequate for that minister who sacrifices the interest and cause of his King to his own private resentments. He was little lamented; for by his mal-administration whilst Vizir, he had acquired the universal hatred of the people.

Mauz O'din Jehander Shaw, thus falling a sacrifice to love and indolence, *Mahommed Furrukhsir* was proclaimed Emperor of *Indostan* without opposition. The first acts of his government consisted in rewarding those who had raised him to the throne: He appointed *Seyd Abdallah Khan* his *Vizir*, and *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan* his *Bukshi*, or Pay-Master General, with the title of *Emir al Omrah*; (*The Prince of Princes*) and bestowed upon him the government of *Deccan* suitably rewarding the other Omrahs that had rendred him service. *Anno* 1715. *Mahommed Furrukhsir.*

But before we enter on the reign of *Furrukhsir*, we beg to be indulged a few words on the late murdered Emperor *Jehander*; whose character very minutely resembled that of the unfortunate and licentious Roman, *Marcus Antonius*.

He

He was thought by his father, *Shaw Alum*, the only General capable of repulſing the dangerous annual invaſions of the *Berkeit*, which threatned the Empire on the ſide of *Perſia*. Prince *Mauz O'din* was ſent againſt theſe warlike people, at the head of the choiceſt troops in the Empire, and in a continued campaign of five years; he had many and ſignal battles with the invaders that gave him vaſt renown. In one of theſe, when the enemy was intrenched behind a ſtrong and thick wood, on which ſide they could only be attacked, he cut a paſſage through the wood, forced their intrenchments ſword in hand, and hardly any of the enemy eſcaped the ſlaughter. On the particulars of this action arriving at court, the Emperor his father, gave him the title of *Prince of the Hatchets*, one of the *honorary titles* ever ſince given to the firſt Prince of the blood.

His diſpoſition before he came to the throne was ſo engaging and amiable, that he became the idol of the whole Empire; this drew on him the jealouſy of his father, who, to counterbalance his growing influence, heaped that partial power and favor on his ſecond ſon *Mahommed Azim* (the father of *Furrukhsir*) which enabled him to make the ſtand he did againſt his brother's

legal

legal right of succession, at the demise of *Shaw Aalum*, as before related. In short, if he could be defended from that perfidious stroke against his other two brothers, and had escaped the bewitching snares of that eastern *Cleopatra*, *Lall Kooar*, he most probably would have left a more shining character, (and a much more honorable one) on the records of fame, than that of his grandfather *Aurung Zeb*.

Lal Kooar had the honor of being condemned for life a prisoner in the royal prison, or castle of *Selimgur*. Some of her base relations who had been raised to places of high trust were cut off by the conqueror, and others degraded.

Furrukhsir having obtained the diadem, as before related, peace *seemed* to be settled in the Empire; but the evil destiny of that Prince forbad its long continuance. During this period, the power of the *Seyds* grew enormous, and left the Emperor the name and truppings of royalty only; they disposed of all important posts by their sole authority, amassed immense wealth, and sequestered the public revenues to their own private emolument, securing thereby the attachment of the principal officers of the

crown,

crown, who (with a very few exceptions) were intirely devoted to their interest.

Furrukhsir very soon saw and felt his despicable state of dependance, but could not easily forget how much he owed to the spirited conduct and friendship of these ambitious brothers; he patiently submitted to the many indignities he labored under, without meditating any thing against them, the life and crown they had given him he knew still depended too much on their will and disposal; he dreaded their power, which indeed was greater than any subjects in this despotic government can possess, with safety to their Prince, or indeed than can be consistent with his honor.

Wearied at length, at finding himself this cypher of a King, he nobly determined to free himself from the shackles with which he had been bound so long, by having both the brothers assassinated at the same time; *Abdallah Khan* at *Delhy*, and *Hossan Aly Khan* as he was upon his march to his government at *Deccan*, where he was going to dispossess *Nizam al Mulueh*.

A design so complicated in its nature, could not be carried on without being communicated

communicated to many, amongſt theſe the Emperor chiefly intruſted and depended on the two Omrahs, *Khanderan Khan*, and *Mobariz Jung*, for the execution of it; almoſt the only two officers about the court, who had been neglected by the powerful *Seyds*. *Khanderan* was ſuſpected of betraying the whole to *Abdallah Khan*; whether this was the fact, is uncertain; but it is very certain both the brothers had early intelligence of the deſign againſt them, and determined to have the ſtart, by depoſing the Emperor.

The Vizir immediately withdrew from court, ſent expreſs upon expreſs to recal his brother, and put himſelf at the head of a body of troops, whoſe commander he was by virtue of his poſt.

Furrukhsir finding his intentions againſt the *Seyds* diſcovered, had recourſe to diſſimulation; he ſent his mother to the Vizir, charged with his ſolemn proteſtations of the falſhood of the information the Vizir had received, and with profeſſions of inviolable friendſhip and affection, intreating that he would return to court and contradict any advices he might have diſpatched to his brother.

The Vizir having no room to doubt of his intelligence of the Emperor's projected aſſaſſination, returned for anſwer, That, as a mark of the ſincerity of his profeſſions, he ſhould diſcharge his guards and ſervants, and ſubmit to receive ſuch as he, the Vizir, ſhould think proper to place about him. This hard condition the Emperor abjectly and unadviſedly conſented to, and the Vizir, contented with this ſecurity, waited the arrival of his brother, without proceeding further. Theſe events fell out about the beginning of the year 1719.

Seyd Hoſſan Ali Khan returned at the head of a ſtrong body of horſe, immediately on the receipt of his brother's letters, and arrived at *Delhy* the 14th of *February* 1719, where after a ſhort conference with the Vizir, and *Ajeet Singh* (*Mahab Rajah*, and father-in-law to the Emperor) and with ſeveral principal Omrahs, they all proceeded to the apartment of *Auring Zebe's* daughter in the caſtle of *Selimgur*, and demanded the delivery of *Raffeeil al Dirjaat*, (ſon of *Raffeeil al Kaddr*, third ſon of *Bahadr Shaw*) a youth about 17 years of age, proclaimed him Emperor of *Indoſtan*, and ſwore allegiance to him.

Pro-

Proceeding thence to the palace with their new King, as ſoon as they came into the preſence of *Furrukhsir*, the *Seyds* upbraided him with perfidy and ingratitude, and *Ajeet Singh* with the breach of his coronation oath, in impoſing the *Jeſcrah* (or poll tax) upon the *Hindoos*; they then diveſted him of his ſword, and enſigns of royalty, and with little ceremony informed him they had raiſed *Raffeeil Dirjaut* to the throne, to whom they forced him to pay obeiſance, and then impriſoned him in a tower over the principal gate of the citadel. *Anno 1719. Raffeil al Dirjaut.*

The day after his impriſonment he was miſerably deprived of his ſight; on the ſecond day, he attempted to finiſh his torments by a doſe of poiſon, but it proved ineffectual; on the third day, the Vizir ſent executioners to ſtrangle him; but ſoon as he felt the cord about his neck (ſtill wretchedly deſirous of life) he interpoſed his hands and forcibly broke it, dragging on thus a miſerable being until the next day, the 24th of *February* 1719, when he was at laſt ſtrangled, after a reign of little more than four years; Mr. *Fraſer* ſays ſeven, but this cannot be; for, by his own ſhewing, *Auring Zebe* deceaſed in the beginning of the year 1707, his ſon, *Shaw Allum*, reigned ſix years, that is, to the beginning of the year 1713; *Furrukhsir* was murdered in

the beginning of the year 1719, ſo that if his ſucceſſion had been uninterrupted, it could have been no more than ſix years; but the intervening reign of his uncle, *Mauz O'din Jehandar Shaw*, who ſat on the throne 18 months, reduces the reign of *Furrukhsir* to four years and ſix months.

The *Seyds* finding they had miſtaken the genius of the young Emperor *Durjaat*, (whom they had raiſed to the throne in preference to his elder brother *Raffeeh al Dowlat*, as judging his youth would be more ſubſervient to their views) took him off by poiſon, when he had reigned about three months, and raiſed to the throne his eldeſt brother, juſt abovementioned, who aſſumed the ſtile and title of *Shaw Jehan, (King of the World.)*

Anno 1719. *Roffeeh al Dowlat. Shaw Jehan.*

The brothers, intoxicated with their exceſs of power, began by various acts of oppreſſion to create themſelves enemies from all quarters, the univerſal hatred of the people for their repeated murders, co-operating with the envy of the principal *Rajahs* and *Omrahs*, (who could endure no longer to ſee the *Seyds* engroſs wholly a power and authority in the Empire, which they themſelves wanted a ſhare in) a powerful party was now formed againſt them.

At

At the head of this confederacy were *Bijeye Jeet Singh*, (more commonly known by the name of *Rajah Jaij Singh*) *Gopaul Singh Beandela*, and *Churaman Jut*, all puissant Rajahs, the first named being hereditary governor of the fortress of *Agra*. Here it is in point that we recite an anecdote of this empire, which is not generally known.

When the *Hindoo* Rajahs or Princes of *Indostan* submitted to *Timerlane*, it was on these capital stipulations: That the Emperors should marry a daughter of *Rajah Jeet Singh's* house; that the head of this house should be, in perpetuity, governor of the citadel of *Agra*, and anoint the King at his coronation; and that the Emperors should never impose the jesserah (or poll tax) upon the *Hindoos*. We beg leave to apologize for this (as we thought) necessary digression, and proceed.

These three powerful *Rhaasepoot Rajahs*, with some discontented *Omrahs*, withdrew themselves, and assembled together in the neighbourhood of *Agra*; and on the first intelligence of the murder of *Rafeed Dirjaat*, released (from a forty years imprisonment in the castle of *Agra*) *Nicosir*, a son of the great *Ekbbar*, and proclaimed him Em- *Anno* 1719.

Emperor; and raised a respectable army to support their election against that of the *Seyds* in favor of *Shaw Jehan*.

On the first notice of this formidable competitor, *Seyd Hossan Ali Khan* was dispatched at the head of forty thousand horse towards *Agra*, and was met within four miles of that city by *Nicosir's* forces, under the command of *Jeet Singh*; who putting himself at the head of his *Rhaasepoots*, intrepidly charged *Seyd Hossan Aly Khan's* army: a long and bloody conflict ensued, wherein at last *Nicosir's* forces began to give way, when the *Rhaasepoots*, by the example of their Rajah *Jeet Singh*, displaying the *yellow scarf*, (the *Rhaasepoots* signal for conquest or death) the battle had a sudden turn; *Hossan Aly Khan's* troops, struck with terror at seeing that dreaded signal, and the fury with which the *Rhaasepoots* returned to the charge, soon turned their backs and fled, disregarding as well the heroic example, as menaces of their General, who finding all endeavours to rally them fruitless, made the best retreat he could with them.

Shaw Jehan wisely profiting by the error, which had proved fatal to *Mauz O'din*, in a situation similar to his own, immediately took the field with the Vizir *Seyd Abdallah Khan*,

Khan, and with a large and choice army marched to ſupport and re-inforce *Seyd Hoſſan Ali Khan*.

This General in his retreat, or rather flight, had been vigorouſly purſued by *Rajah Jeet Singh*, and his nominal Emperor *Nicoſir*, ſollicitous, if poſſible, to prevent his union with *Shaw Jehan* and his brother, who were (they had learned) on their march to his ſuccour.—In this judicious intention they failed, for *Hoſſan Ali Khan* with his beaten troops joined the Emperor before the Rajah could overtake him: both armies being greatly harraſſed with their ſevere marches, the deciſive battle, which was to determine the poſſeſſion of this mighty Empire, was delayed until the next day.

Hoſſan Ali Khan, it was ſaid, ſelected the evening before the battle, a body of 2000 horſe, compoſed all of ſubaltern officers; to whom he gave ſtrict command, that they ſhould pay regard to nothing elſe in the approaching engagement, but the cutting off, or taking priſoner *Nicoſir*, or *Jeet Singh*.

The battle began ſoon after ſun-riſe the next morning, and was fought with incredible fury and obſtinacy, for the ſpace

of three hours; but at length the party abovementioned so well executed what they had in charge, that they took *Nicoar* prisoner, which being immediately known to his party, they were soon after defeated, or rather retreated; for in these eastern battles, if the principal on either side is killed or taken prisoner, there is an end generally to the contest.——The issue of this battle, which was fought about the middle of *June* 1719, on the plains of *Futteabad*, put *Shaw Jehan* in tranquil possession of the Empire.

The Emperor gave *Nicoar* the choice of death, or loss of sight; he preferred the latter, which was executed on him in the field of battle, and then was conducted back to his prison at *Agra*; a melancholy victim to the ambition of others.

Savagee Jeet Singh, with a select body of *Rhaasepoors*, by a well conducted retreat recovered *Agra*, and was soon after reconciled to the King and admitted to favour, conformable to the steady policy of this government, in keeping a good understanding with the principal Rajahs, and more especially with the *head* of this house, who is ever capable of raising and fomenting a very formidable party, upon any intended revo-

lution in this deſpotic and precarious monarchy.

Shaw Jehan lived not long to enjoy his high dignity, for he deceaſed by a natural death, ſoon after his return to *Delhy*, towards the latter end of the year 1719. Happy! we may ſay, in having made this quiet and eaſy exit; for had he diſcovered a wiſh to make himſelf a *King indeed*, it is more than probable he would have ſhared the ſame fate with his three predeceſſors.

His death for ſome days was concealed by the ſingular addreſs of the *Seyds*; and *Hoſſan Ali Khan*, on the night of the day that *Shaw Jehan* deceaſed, privately ſet out with a ſmall but ſelect party of horſe for *Agra*, where he publiſhed his death; and with the participation of the *Mhaabab* Rajah, *Sawjee Jeet Singh* immediately proclaimed *Mahommed Shaw, Emperor of Indoſtan*; who was by the Rajah anointed accordingly. *Mahommed Shaw* was the only ſon of *Khojiſtah Akhter* before mentioned, the youngeſt ſon of *Shaw Alluh*. Soon after, the Vizir and the other great officers of the crown arrived at *Agra* to pay their ſubmiſſion to the new Emperor, and were all confirmed in their poſts.

Ma-

Mahommed Shaw was ſoon convinced, by the firſt movements of the *Seyds*, that though he was raiſed to the poſſeſſion of the enſigns and exteriors of royalty, he was in effect little better than a priſoner of ſtate, whilſt the two brothers exerciſed the uncontrouled authority they had ſo long and ſucceſsfully uſurped. He did not want courage, but plainly ſaw their power was too great to be attacked by open force; he therefore wiſely, for ſome time, diſſembled his ſentiments and reſentments, until he could form a proper judgment who amongſt the Omrahs and officers were truſt worthy, and in whom he could with ſafety to himſelf put a perfect confidence.

It was not long before his penetration pointed out the perſons he ſought for; *Mahommed Amin Khan*, *Heydr Kuli Khan*, and *Kondoran*, all Omrahs of the firſt rank, he was well aſſured, were inveterate though concealed enemies to the *Seyds*; to theſe Omrahs therefore he ventured to open himſelf, about the middle of *September* 1720, and moſt pathetically lamented his abject dependant ſtate, under *the tyranny* of *the Seyds*, imploring their aſſiſtance to extricate and free him, themſelves, and his people, from their uſurped power.

This

This overture from the Emperor met with a warm reception from the Omrahs; they ſwore fidelity to him, and he, on his part, ſwore that *Mahammed Amin Khan* ſhould ſucceed to the Vizirut; *Khandoran* to the *Mhir Bukhſhi*, and be created *Embir al Omrah*; and that *Heyder Kuli Khan*, (who was at this time General of the Ordnance) ſhould obtain the Soubahdary of *Ahmedabad*.

Theſe preliminaries ſettled, and the fidelity of theſe Omrahs ſecured more by making it their own intereſted cauſe, than from any attachment to the royal family, a favourable occaſion was only wanting; and the *Seyds* themſelves contributed in ſome degree to their own downfal,—for now the meaſure of their iniquity was full,—too long had they reigned the oppreſſors of their Kings, and of the people.

The firſt act of the *Seyds* power after the acceſſion of *Mahammed Shaw*, was to oblige him to declare *Nizam al Mulnck* a traytor, and demand his appearance at court.

Nizam had been long obnoxious to the *Seyds*: the inſurrection raiſed by *Rajah Jeet Singh* in favour of *Nicoſir*, had prevented their

their looking towards him ſooner; but now, having fixed *Mahommed Shaw* on the throne, they determined to ſuppreſs him.

Nizam, well knowing there was no medium between death and the jealouſy of the *Seyds*, in place of paying obedience to the royal mandate, killed the gurburdars (meſſengers) that brought it; advanced from his government of *Malva* to *Eugon*, where he ſeized the royal treaſure; from thence he penetrated into *Deccan*, the government of *Seyd Hoſſan Ali Khan*, attacked the capital of the province and took it, aſſumed the Soubaſhip, and ſending *his Nabs*, or deputy governors to every part, diſplaced thoſe of *Hoſſan Ali Khan*, and treated even his women with great indignities. After theſe exploits (to which it was ſaid he was privately inſtigated by the Emperor, purpoſely to exaſperate the *Seyds*) he wrote the moſt ſubmiſſive letter to the Emperor, extenuating and palliating the neceſſity of a conduct, to which the tyranny and injuſtice of the *Seyds* had drove him.

On news of the outrages committed by *Nizam* in the *Deccan*, the Emperor put on a well diſſembled rage, and ſwore by *Mahomet* he would take the field againſt the rebel himſelf. This reſolution was the reſult

of

of a private conference with his aſſociated Omrahs, it being judged the firſt neceſſary ſtep for the reduction of theſe *dangerous brothers*, was to ſeparate them; accordingly the Emperor ordered the Vizir *Seyd Abdallah Khan* to return to *Delhy*, to ſuperintend the civil adminiſtration, and preſerve the peace of that city during his abſence; and himſelf, with *Seyd Hoſſan Ali Khan*, and the reſt of the Omrahs, took the field on the 28th of *September* 1720, with a royal and puiſſant army, for the pretended reduction of the rebel *Nizam ul Muluk*.

The Emperor made a long march that day towards *Dercan*, and encamped late in the evening; here the means for aſſaſſinating *Seyd Hoſſan Ali Khan* were adjuſted by the three Omrahs, to whom the King left the execution of this important event: they found it neceſſary now to diſcover their deſign to ſeveral other Omrahs, who they knew had been deeply injured by the *Seyds*, and were as inveterate as themſelves. Amongſt theſe, one *Hyddr Khan*, a ſmall Munſubdar of diſtinguiſhed courage, was pitched upon to perpetrate the deed, and as the attempt muſt be attended with apparent hazard to *Hyddr Khan*, *Mahommed Amim Khan*, and *Heydr Kuli Khan*, to encourage him, ſolemnly engaged to be at hand,

with

with a ſelect party to reſcue him from the rage of *Hoſſan Ali Khan*'s followers.

Early the next morning the ſignal was made for decamping, and *Seyd Hoſſan* went into the Emperor's tent to pay his obeiſance and receive his orders; all the Omrahs and officers, as cuſtomary, were round his tent; *Hyddr Khan* placed himſelf at the door with a petition in his hand: as ſoon as *Seyd Hoſſan* came out of his tent, and had ſeated himſelf in his pallenkeen, *Hyddr Khan* preſented his petition, and whilſt *Seyd Hoſſan* was attentively peruſing it, the aſſaſſin ſtabbed him with his kunjaar (dagger) between the neck and collar bone, of which wound he inſtantly expired.

Notwithſtanding the ſolemn engagement to reſcue *Hyddr Khan*, it was judged expedient to ſacrifice this daring man, that his death might blunt and ſatiate in ſome meaſure the wrath of thoſe guards who were in immediate attendance on the General's perſon, by whom *Hyddr Khan* was aſſaulted with the utmoſt fury, and though, drawing his ſcymiter, he defended himſelf with aſtoniſhing bravery for ſome time, yet overpowered by numbers he was cut to pieces; yet the tumult raiſed about the body did not ceaſe, until *Mahommed Amîn Khan*,

Khondoran, *Hyadr Kuli Khan*, and their troops came up to quell it; the Emperor mounting his elephant and cauſing proclamation to be made to the army, that the *Embir al Omrah* was killed by his order, the confuſion ſubſided; except in one quarter, where five thouſand troops, commanded by *Jierait Khan*, nephew to the deceaſed General, breathed nothing but revenge: between theſe and the royal troops a ſharp conflict enſued, in which many were killed (on both ſides) amongſt whom was a ſon of *Mahommed Amin Khan*; but *Jierait Khan* falling by an arrow diſcharged by the King, (who it was ſaid emptied three quivers in the engagement) the reſt called for quarter.

The Emperor proceeding to the tent of *Seyd Hoſſan Ali Khan*, ſat upon his elephant and ſaw the ſoldiers, by his permiſſion, plunder it of a khorore of Rupees; the jewels found there to an equal amount were appropriated to his own uſe.

Mahommed Shaw, ſenſible that but half the work was done, whilſt *Seyd Abdallah Khan* ſurvived, immediately directed his march towards *Delhy*, declaring *Mahommed Amin Khan* Vizir, and *Khondoran, Embir al Omrah*.

Ab-

Abdallah [illegible] was not far from [illegible], when an express from *Seyd Abdallah* [illegible] with [illegible], advising him of the treacherous death of his brother; [illegible] and instantly dispatched a trusty officer with a party of horse to that city, with orders to return immediately with *Sultan Ibrahim*, younger brother of the Emperor's, *Rajeed al Dirjaat*, and *Rajeed al Dowlat*. This officer executed his commission with great celerity, and being returned with *Sultan Ibrahim*, *Abdallah* proclaimed that young Prince Emperor of *Indoſtan*; then putting himſelf at the head of a numerous army, he marched back to meet *Mahommed Shaw*.

The two armies met the latter end of *October*, *Anno* 1720, and a bloody battle enſued: *Victory* ſtood doubtful a long time to which ſhe ſhould give the day; but when *Abdallah* was on the verge of ſnatching a certain conqueſt, a ſeaſonable re-inforcement turned the iſſue in favor of the Emperor; for during the heat of the engagement *Diabahadr* (nephew of *Chivalrau* Governor of *Eleabas*) arrived with a freſh body of troops; theſe aſſaulting the rear and flank of *Abdallah*'s army with the greateſt intrepidity, a total defeat and rout ſoon followed. *Seyd Abdallah Khan* was taken priſoner; the *Emperor* ſpared his life, in conſideration

ſideration of his owing him the crown he wore, but condemned him to perpetual impriſonment (as recited more minutely by Mr. *Fraſer*) ſequeſtring his vaſt poſſeſſions and wealth to his own uſe.

Thus fell the *Seyds Hoſſan Ali Khan*, and *Adallah Khan*, by a reverſe of fortune too common to be very remarkable; the wonder is! that they ſhould have maintained themſelves ſo long (in this deſpotic and violent government) in a degree of abſolute power and authority, hardly equalled in ſtory, and that during the reigns of five ſucceſſive Emperors, four of whom they *themſelves* had placed upon the throne.

The laſt deciſive ſtroke put *Mahommed Shaw* into the quiet poſſeſſion of the Empire of *Indoſtan*. A long peace enſued; and the Emperor gave a looſe to the indulgence of his natural propenſities, which centered only in the exceſſive uſe of wine, women, and hunting; to every thing elſe he became regardleſs; the reins of government in time ſlackened, confuſion in the Empire followed; every *Omrah* was planing for himſelf, and none thought of the *public*. Theſe univerſal *diſorders* endangered, in conſequence, the *health* and well

being of the ſtate; and paved the way for the invaſion of the Empire by *Nadir Shaw* in the year 1738 (ſo accurately inveſtigated by Mr. *Fraſer*) brought about by the intrigues of *Nizam al Mulluck*. This miniſter after the reduction of the *Seyds* was ſoon taken into favor, and confirmed in the government of *Deccan*, or rather maintained himſelf there by his own ſtrength, as an independant ſovereign.

My readers will eaſily perceive, that in the foregoing recital I have followed the thread of Mr. *Fraſer*'s conciſe narrative; and have only deviated from him in thoſe parts, where my materials afforded me fuller intelligence, and in variety of tranſactions which he (obviouſly) thought lay out of the way of his *main-object*; his intention being very evidently no more, than to give a connected catalogue of the Mogulls from *Timur Lung*, (*Tamarlam*) and at the ſame time convey a ſlight view of the progreſſive ſtate and condition of the Empire of *Indoſtan*, as neceſſarily preparative to the period of *Nadir Shaw*'s invaſion of it, without embarraſſing himſelf with any more of the particular circumſtances attending the ſucceſſions, than were conſiſtent with, and immediately in point to his

his design. All that I wish or hope for from *this* production is, that it may be esteemed an illustration only of that ingenious and learned gentleman's work, comprised within the space, from *Auring Zebe's* demise to the reduction of the *Seyds*.

CHAP. II.

Tranſactions in the Subahdary *of* Bengal, *from the year* 1717 *to the year* 1750, *incluſive.*

OUR preſent ſubject calls us back to the reign of *Furrukhſir*, when *Jaffir Khan*, an *Omrah* of great conſideration and intereſt at court, ruled theſe provinces with a rod of iron. His name to this day is remembered with deteſtation; to fill his coffers, he inflicted the moſt cruel puniſhments on the *Rajahs* and *Zîmindars*, by ways and means unheard of, and unknown, but in this Eaſtern government: he alſo highly oppreſſed the *Europeans* ſettled in theſe parts; yet, notwithſtanding his very mal-adminiſtration, he had the addreſs to obtain the governments of *Babar* and *Oriſſa*, united with that of *Bengal* in his perſon, which ever before had been diſtinct and ſeparate Nabobſhips.

With

With this new acquiſition of power, he removed from *Dacca*, which, until that time, had been the chief reſidence of the Soubahs, to *Morſhadabad*, which city now became the *capital* of the provinces.

Jaffir Khan had a favourite daughter, whom he married to *Soujah Khan*, a native of *Delhy* of ſome diſtinction; this perſon was appointed *Niab*, or deputy governor of *Oriſſa*, when *Jaffir Khan* changed the ſeat of his chief reſidence, and quitted *Dacca*.

Soujah Khan, by his marriage with the Soubah's daughter, had two ſons born to him, the eldeſt named *Mahommed Tukhee Khan*, the younger *Suffraaz Khan*. The firſt had conſtantly reſided with his father at *Cuttack* the capital of *Oriſſa*, and the other with his grandfather at *Morſhadabad*.

Jaffir Khan's fondneſs for *Suffraaz Khan* was ſo prevalent, that when he obtained an order from court for *Soujah Khan*'s ſucceeding him in the Soubahſhip, he procured at the ſame time *Suffraaz Khan* to be appointed King's *Dewan* of the provinces, in prejudice to the juſt pretenſions of his elder brother *Mahommed Tukhee Khan*.

This ill-judged mark of affection and preference in the old *Soubah*, was the cauſe of declared and unabating enmity between the two brothers; though *this effect*, probably without *that cauſe*, would have naturally reſulted from the difference of their genius and diſpoſitions, actuated by the different examples they had long before them, in the father, and grandfather.——*Soujah Khan* was bold, rigid in government, but withal complaiſant and affectionate.—*Mahommed Tukhee Khan* was brave and generous, delighting in the exerciſes of a ſoldier and the art of war.—*Jaffir Khan* was inveterate, avaritious, and a monſter of cruelty.—*Suffraas Khan* was impetuous, overbearing and vindictive; and as he had been a ſtranger to contradiction from his infancy, ſo in his more advanced age, he could not bear it in the leaſt degree, even from the mouth of wiſdom.

Anno 1725. In the year 1725 *Jaffir Khan* deceaſed, to the general joy of the provinces, and *Soujah Khan*, haſtening to the capital, took upon him the government; in the journey he was accompanied by *Mahommed Tukhee Khan*.

When the brothers met, the embers of diſguſt and hatred, which had been only ſmothered by abſence, now burſt into a flame,

flame, that had well nigh conſumed them both, had not the prudence and authority of the Soubah interpoſed, who finding it impoſſible to accompliſh a reconciliation between them, reſolved to part them; and immediately appointed *Mahommed Tukhee Khan*, his Niab of *Oriſſa*, with orders to ſet out the next day for his government. There in a few months he died univerſally lamented. His death gave his father the deepeſt ſorrow, for he loved him with a juſt and truely paternal tenderneſs.

On *Soujah Khan*'s ſucceſſion to the government, he releaſed all the *Rajahs* and *Zemindars* that had been impriſoned by his father-in-law; and eaſed them of ſundry heavy taxes and impoſitions, that they had been loaded with: calling them all before him, he enjoined them to attend carefully to the cultivation of their lands, and the improvement of the manufactures: aſſuring them that in future they ſhould be exempt from the ſeverities they had ſuffered under his predeceſſors; reminding them, that as they themſelves had long felt the hand of oppreſſion; he depended it would be a leſſon to them, not to oppreſs the *tenants* dependant on them: then with a peremptory tone telling them, that if any were found deficient in their annual payments, their

lands ſhould be taken from them, and given to others; he graciouſly diſmiſſed them to their reſpective diſtricts.

Soujah Khan taking into conſideration the ſmall ſtanding force of the provinces, that until his time never exceeded the number of five or ſix hundred horſe, determined to enlarge it to as many thouſands, which he ſoon accompliſhed. He then made ſundry regulations reſpecting the trade of the provinces, both inland and foreign; caſting his eyes particularly on the *Europeans*; and attentive that they ſhould not clandeſtinely partake of greater immunities and advantages, than the terms of their *Fhirmaunds*, or grants, gave them a title to.

To this end, he encreaſed the number of *Chowkee*'s (or places for the receipts of cuſtoms) to twenty, upon the ſeveral rivers, whereas before his government there were only *two*, *Buxſh Bundar*, and *Azimgunge*.

This wiſe and ſolid conduct, had it's natural and proper effects, the provinces ſoon wore a different face, commerce and manufactures flouriſhed, and in a very few years he was enabled greatly to increaſe the royal revenue, and ſtipulate to pay into the royal treaſury annually, one *Khorore*, one *Lac*, one thouſand

ſand one hundred and one *ſicca Rupees*, over and above forty *Lacs* of *Rupees*, annually remitted to court, to different *Omrahs* reſiding there, on account of their *Jagbir* lands; in conſequence, his intereſt at court was ſtrengthened, himſelf eſtabliſhed in his government, and the ſucceſſion by *grant* ſecured in his family. *Anno* 1730.

Having brought the Soubah *Soujah Khan* to this happy and honourable period, and given a general view of the ſtate of theſe opulent provinces; we next propoſe to trace the cauſes, circumſtances, and progreſs of an extraordinary uſurpation of this government, in the beginning of the year 1742.

Though the ambition, avarice, ingratitude, treachery and violence of two artful *adventurers*, were the *ſeemingly* apparent cauſes of this uſurpation; yet without other *co-operating incidents*, thoſe (too common ſucceſsful auxiliaries in the invaſion of *right*) would have proved ineffectual.

The ſecret ſprings of the juſt mentioned co-operating incidents, were known but to few; and we venture to aver, were never put together before the penning of the manu-

manuſcripts, A. D. 1750, alluded to in the preliminary diſcourſe to this work, from which manuſcript the author of the Reflections, as before remarked, diſingenuouſly took as his own, what he calls his "Short "ſketch of the hiſtory of *Bengal*, from "the year 1739 to the year 1750 *."

Aliverdi Khan and *Hodjee Hamet*, were brothers, natives of *Tartary*, and followers of fortune. In this purſuit they arrived at the court of *Delhy*, about the year 1721, and put themſelves under the protection of the then Vizir *Khondoran*. In their genius and qualifications they differed extreamly; the elder, *Hodjee Hamet*, was of a cowardly, but deeply intriguing diſpoſition, well ſkilled in political learning, and a profound judge of the nature of mankind; with *theſe talents*, he poſſeſſed not a ſingle moral principle capable of impeding *them* in their full career, and therefore became every way qualified for the tranſactions of *this Eaſtern* (or indeed any other) court.

* Reciting the ſame chain of facts as they ſtand in the manuſcript, with little variation, except the poor diſguiſe of here and there a different mode of expreſſion, interſperſed with a few *trite reflections*, which are *purely* his own. We thought this note highly neceſſary, leſt we ſhould incur the undeſerved cenſure of retailing at ſecond hand the labors of another.

Aliverdi

Aliverdi Khan was bold and daring, bred to arms, and ſkilled in all the duties of a ſoldier, enterpriſing, of ready underſtanding, and naturally virtuous and honorable, until theſe amiable qualities were perverted and ſubdued, by the inſtigations and evil counſels of his brother, and his other talents made ſubſervient to *Hamet*'s ambitious views of aggrandiſing their obſcure family.

Hodjee acquired this title from his having in his early years made a pilgrimage to *Hodge*, (or the tomb of *Mahommed* at *Mecca*) a duty which the *Khoran* impoſes on every *Muſſelman* once in his life, either in perſon or by proxy; and he who performs it in perſon, thereby obtains for life the honorary appellation of *Hodjee*, and is much reverenced by the true believers in their prophet.

It has been confidently aſſerted, and as currently believed in *Bengal*, that *Hodjee Hamet* had been preferred at *Delhy*, to the poſt of maſter, or keeper of the crown jewels; with the moſt valuable of which it was ſaid he eloped, and afterwards ſanctified this theft by a pilgrimage to *Mecca*; but upon the ſtricteſt enquiry we pronounce this report an aſperſion of his enemies, having the beſt authority for ſaying neither of

of the brothers appeared at court before the year 1721:—but the improbability of the fact ſpeaks it a calumny—their original obſcurity is allowed on all hands; can it then poſſibly gain credit, that either of them ſhould be preferred to a poſt, which is uſually beſtowed on one of the firſt Omrahs of the Empire?

But if we ſhould admit (what alſo has been aſſerted) that *Hodjee* was for a ſhort ſpace in the ſervice of the *keeper* of the crown jewels, and might have it in his power to commit the theft alledged againſt him; yet the fact remains equally improbable; for can it be believed that after ſo atrocious a crime, both the brothers ſhould obtain the patronage and recommendation of *Khondoran*?—Which they certainly brought with them to *Cuttac* (the reſidence of the Nabob *Soujah Khan*) *Anno* 1722.

Anno 1722. On their arrival, they were taken into the ſervice of *Soujah Dowla*, as immediate attendants on his perſon; *Hodjee* in capacity of his firſt *Kiſtmutgar* (or valet) and *Aliverdi*, his *Chilum Purdaar* (dreſſer or rather keeper of his ſmoaking pipe) with the additional pay and denomination of a ſeapoy or foot ſoldier.

Their

Their riſe from theſe menial ſtations was rapid, but not aſtoniſhing in a country where ſuperior talents ever make their way to ſpeedy promotion.—The Nabob very ſoon diſcovered in *Hodjee* an extenſive genius and underſtanding in men and things; and *Hodjee* as ſoon found out the great, and almoſt only foible of his maſter; which was an ungovernable appetite for *variety* of women.

Hodjee benefited himſelf of this ruling paſſion, and by indefatigable attention and induſtry out-ran even the Nabob's deſires —the compiler of *the Reflections* ſays, *Hodjee* proſtituted, "and made a ſacrifice "of his own daughter to his maſter's "luſt:" we confeſs we never heard of it before; be this as it may, it is moſt certain that *Hodjee* by indulging and feeding this paſſion, quickly gained an aſcendant over his maſter, and had the diſpoſal of all places of ſmall importance; and as he was obſerved to be the growing favourite, all ſuits and petitions were preferred through his mediation.

Aliverdi Khan's extraordinary military genius did not eſcape his maſter's notice; he was ſoon promoted to be *Jemmautdar* of the Nabob's foot guards, and not long after

after preferred to a command of horſe at the interceſſion of his brother—The ruling paſſion of *Hodjee*, was an unbounded thirſt of riches; but whilſt he labored to extend his influence over his maſter, as conducive to the ſatisfying this vice, he was ever watchful and attentive, that his brother's intereſt went hand in hand with his own.

To theſe ends he daily made himſelf more and more uſeful to *Soujah Khan*, and being well verſed in the arts of financing, and the invention of *ways and means*, his importance was confirmed: (this being the moſt uſeful and eſſential duty of a miniſter in the *Eaſt*, as well as in the *Weſt*.) He was alſo an exquiſite and penetrating *ſpy* upon the actions of all the Niabs and other officers employed under the Nabob, with whom he ſecretly planted his own emiſſaries, ſo that nothing was tranſacted in any part of the province of *Oriſſa*, that his maſter had not the moſt early intelligence of.——

The government of *Indoſtan* is perhaps the only government in the world, where the character of a *ſpy* is not attended with reproach and infamy; here it is dignified and honourable. The Emperor and all the Soubahs of the provinces entertain an offi-

cer

ber with this title, who is always a perſon of conſideration; but like *Sultan* he is more generally feared than loved. *Hodjee* poſſeſſed not the title of the Nabob's *Hircarrah*, (ſpy) but he virtually was ſo, and by this practice, did not a little gain upon his maſter's confidence, and thereby ſmoothed the way to deſigns, which about this time, *Anno* 1724, began to open upon him; though he yet concealed them even from his brother.

The influence and power of the two brothers acquired new ſtrength every day, in ſuch ſort, that at the cloſe of this year they had gained a full dominion over the actions and inclinations of the Nabob; who at this period ſucceeded to the government of the three provinces by the demiſe of the Soubah *Jaffir Khan*, as before recited in the former part of this chapter: the brothers attended him to the capital, where the ſcene of action became enlarged and more adequate to their different, though equally enterprizing ſpirits. *Hodjee Hamet* was ſoon declared prime miniſter, and *Aliverdi* promoted to a command of horſe of the firſt diſtinction. *Anno* 1724. *Anno* 1725.

The firſt judicious movements made by *Soujah Khan* on his coming to the Soubahſhip,

bahſhip, (already recorded) were it was ſaid the reſult of the ſalutary councils of *Hodjee Hamet*.—But if we admit the fact, let us not too haſtily conclude that this advice flowed from any principle of affection to his maſter, or regard to his honor, or from a commiſeration of the ſuffering *Rajahs*; no, theſe worthy conſiderations were foreign to his heart, as appeared from the whole tenor of his future conduct: the moderate councils and meaſures adopted by the Soubah, raiſed the credit of the *miniſter* only, who (by reports of his emiſſaries diſperſed about the city and country) had the ſole honor of a clemency ſtrictly due to the Soubah's goodneſs of heart, and averſion to the practices of his predeceſſor.

The miniſter by this artful procedure gained many friends, and by ſecret ſtipulations with the enlarged *Rajahs*, he filled his own coffers, to the injury of the public revenue. In the degree that the miniſter gained credit and influence in the provinces —the Soubah ſunk in the opinion of the people (a very natural conſequence) and reſting ſecure in the ſuppoſed integrity and extenſive abilities of *Hodjee Hamet*, he abandoned *himſelf* to the full enjoyment of his *ruling paſſion*, and the *government* to the abſolute diſpoſal of the miniſter, who with-

out controul, put in, put out, removed, diſplaced and preferred to every poſt of profit, whomſoever he pleaſed, and by this traffic ſoon acquired immenſe wealth: taking care to keep his maſter buried in ſenſuality, ſtill ſupplying the flame that had poſſeſſion of him with freſh fewel; ranſacking the provinces, and obtaining (no matter at what price) the moſt beautiful women that could be procured to anſwer his purpoſes; and it was confidently (and we believe truely) ſaid, that he carried his panderiſm ſo far, as never to appear at the Soubah's nocturnal levee, without ſomething of this kind in his hand, formed to attract and engage his attention.

Whilſt *Hodjee Hamet* was thus employed in eſtabliſhing his own power and fortune, and blinding the Soubah during the firſt three or four years of his government; his brother *Aliverdi Khan* began to think himſelf neglected; but *Hodjee* ſoon convinced him of his miſtake.

Hitherto *Aliverdi* had not in his own perſon acquired any conſiderable luſtre, except from the light thrown upon it by reflection, from his brother being the miniſter; in his military capacity he had a few opportunities given him of ſhining

alone, both at *Oriſſa* and *Bengal*, juſt ſufficient to gain the belief of his being an intrepid officer: but now the time was come to bring his talents upon the ſtage in a more conſpicuous view, an occaſion offering for which his brother had with impatience long waited.

Anno 1729. Having for ſome time loſt ſight of the Soubah's only ſurviving ſon *Suffraaz Khan*, we here think it neceſſary to bring him to the remembrance of the reader, by a ſlight mention of him; his character has been already delineated, he poſſeſſed the poſt of King's *Dewan*, by appointment from court, and was ſucceſſor apparent to the Soubahſhip; he had long looked with an evil eye on the growing power and influence of *Hodjee Hamet*, which he thought became pregnant with danger, both to his father and himſelf—but he had not the means of reducing it; the impetuoſity of his temper burſt forth ſometimes in abuſes, in inſults to the miniſter, who bore them with patient ſubmiſſion, but heavy reſentment from the Soubah againſt his ſon always followed ſuch abuſe. The crafty *Hodjee* treaſured them up in his memory, for a future reckoning; he daily inſtilled into the ears of the Soubah the many extravagancies his ſon was guilty of, which had too much truth

truth for their foundation; but if that had not been the caſe, the Soubah was too ready to liſten to any thing to his prejudice; for he loved him not—ever ſaying that his unbridled inſolence occaſioned the loſs of his favorite and beloved ſon *Mahommed Tukkee Khan*.

Anno 1729, the Nabobſhip of *Patna* becoming vacant, *Hodjee*, without appearing in it himſelf, influenced the then reigning favourite miſtreſs of the Soubah (who was deeply in his intereſt) to ſolicit it for his brother; who was accordingly the next day nominated to that government. *Suffraaz Khan* upon this appointment, had the courage to tell his father in public *Durbar*, "he was warming and cheriſhing "two ſnakes, that would ſting him and "his family to death." The Soubah ordered him immediately to be taken into cuſtody; but by *Hodjee*'s artful interpoſition he was appeaſed.

The following night the brothers held a long and private conference, to which ſeveral Rajahs and officers in their confidence were admitted.——Here the wicked plan of *Aliverdi Khan*'s government was ſettled, and he departed the next day for *Patna*, where in a few days he arrived, and put in

execution the political maxims and inſtructions he had received from his brother.

Anno 1729 *to* 1735. The exploits of the firſt ſix years of his government—that is from the year 1729 to the year 1735, incluſive, were theſe following; by force, treachery, craft and policy, he ſubdued moſt of the *Rajahs* of the province of *Bahar*, ſome, by the baſeſt diſſimulation and profeſſions of friendſhip, he drew to *Patna*, where he murdered them and ſeized their poſſeſſions, as the brave *Sonder Shaw*, &c.——He then carried his arms againſt the *Chukwaars*, a brave and warlike *Gentoo* race, who poſſeſſed a tract of country oppoſite *Mongheer*, up the river *Samboo*; the prince or *Rajah* of this country had never paid tribute, or acknowleged any ſubjection to the Soubahs of *Bengal*, or indeed to the Mogul himſelf. He laid every thing that paſſed on the river by *Mongheer* under contribution, and put the *European* ſettlements to an annual heavy expence of a large armament to eſcort their trade to and from *Patna*.

The old brave Rajah of theſe people (who had many times fought hand to hand, with the intrepid commander of our troops, Major *Hunt*) deceaſed, in the year 1730, and was ſucceeded by his ſon, a youth of ſeven-

ſeventeen; this young prince, intimidated by the examples made of ſeveral of the *Babar* Rajahs, after a ſhort reſiſtance ſubmitted; acknowledged allegiance to the Emperor, and ſubjection to the Soubah. An annual tribute was ſtipulated, and regularly paid for four years — a ſpot was fixed on, five miles from the mouth of *Samboo*, and thirty from the capital of the *Chukwaars*, where the prince every year met the Nabob's officer on a certain day, the one to pay, the other to receive the tribute, and it was agreed that they ſhould have only thirty attendants on each ſide.

The twentieth of *October* (*Anno* 1735) was the day of payment, at which time the *Engliſh* army, under the command of commandant *Holcombe*, lay encamped in *Mongheer* grove, with the company's trade for the *Patna* factory.—At eleven in the forenoon, we obſerved a boat, which had come out of *Samboo* river, making for *Patna*; the commandant diſpatched two light pulwaars after her, with orders to bring her to — imagining ſhe had a cargo of fiſh — the boat being brought to, and laid alongſide the commandant's budgerow —Gueſs reader our aſtoniſhment! when in place of a cargoe of fiſh, it contained a

cargoe of human *heads!* five baſkets full, and a ſingle head in the ſixth.

On enquiry we learnt that before day break, the officer who was deputed to receive the annual tribute from the Rajah of the *Chukwaars*, had by orders from the Nabob *Aliverdi* placed four hundred men in ambuſh, under the high banks of the river, near the place of meeting—that the prince and the Nabob's officer (Fowzdar of *Babar*, whoſe name we have forgot) with their uſual attendants, met at nine of the clock, and after the common ceremonials, and the tribute received, when they were juſt upon parting, the ſignal being given, the troops in ambuſh ruſhed out, and ſurrounding the Rajah and his few followers, cut them off, one only excepted, who upon a fleet horſe eſcaped, and gave the alarm to the city—among thoſe killed were his principal general officers—We further were informed by the officer who had charge of the boat, that his orders were, to make the beſt of his way to *Patna*, and lay his freight at the *Nabob's feet*; and that the head in the baſket by itſelf, was the Rajah's — he added that the Fowzdar with his troops were in full march to the city *Samboo*.—This was ſoon after verified, for we obſerved about four in the afternoon a cloud

cloud of ſmoak over the city, and the ſame evening we received theſe other particulars, that on the firſt alarm and known fate of the Rajah, his wife, the young *Begum*, ſhut herſelf up with her ſon (about a year old) and her attendants, and ſet fire to her apartments—that the Nabob's troops meeting with no reſiſtance, entered the city, plundered it, and then ſet fire to it.

A body of the Rajah's troops retired, and for ſome time diſputed the poſſeſſion of the country with the Nabob's, but the Fowzdar being re-inforced from his camp, which then lay at *Durriapoor*, a ſhort march from *Mongheer*, the whole country was ſoon reduced, and theſe brave people ſubdued.

Theſe were the *exploits* that rendered the name of *Aliverdi Khan* a terror to the neighbouring diſtricts; and by *theſe*, he amaſſed immenſe riches; part of which he regularly remitted to *Morſhadabad*, to preſerve his own and brother's credit with the Soubah, but the much greater part he reſerved, for a purpoſe he now had in agitation by the pernicious advice of his brother.

Whilſt *Aliverdi Khan* was carrying on theſe operations to eſtabliſh his power,

Hodjee Hamet remained unrivalled in the adminiſtration of the Soubahſhip; but a tranſaction which now manifeſted itſelf, opened the Soubah's eyes.

Anno 1736. *Aliverdi Khan*, forgetful of the duty and obligations he owed to his maſter, and urged by the continued perſuaſions of his brother, began about the beginning of the year 1736, privately to ſolicit at court for the government of *Patna*, and the province of *Babar*, independant of the Soubah of *Bengal*. This negotiation, however cautiouſly conducted, came to the knowledge of *Soujah Khan*. Rage on the inſtant took poſſeſſion of him. *Hodjee* was diſgraced, and for ſome time impriſoned——but by the moſt ſubmiſſive and deceitful letters from *Aliverdi*, and the powerful interceſſion of the *Seraglio*, (*Hodjee*'s never failing reſource) the miniſter was enlarged, and *ſeemingly* again taken into favor.

Aliverdi did not ſlacken his negotiations on this diſcovery of his treachery; but availing himſelf of the favor of his patron *Khondoran*, and by well placed conſiderable bribes, he obtained, the latter end of the year 1737, a phirmaund and proper ſunnods from court, conſtituting him independant governor of the province of *Babar*.

Anno 1737.

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This confirmation of the ingratitude and treachery of the two brothers ſtruck deeply to the heart of *Soujah Khan*. He had however the reſolution and prudence to diſguiſe his ſentiments, knowing their power was too great to be attacked openly, or capable of being reduced by any weapons, but thoſe of diſſimulation and craft; by the aſſiſtance of theſe, he planned, and was juſt on the point of executing, a ſafe and certain revenge on both the brothers, when death put a period to his intentions.——It is more than probable, that *Hodjee*, who ſtill preſerved his influence in the *Seraglio*, received intimation by this channel of the Soubah's deſigns; for his death was ſudden, and judged to be by poiſon. *Anno* 1738.

His ſon *Suffraaz Khan* immediately ſucceeded his father in the government of *Bengal* and *Oriſſa*, as well as in his reſentment to the brothers.

Independant power only increaſed the bad qualities, which had already taken too deep poſſeſſion of *Suffraaz Khan*; his exceſſes in ſpirituous liquors and women, were beyond controul and example; his inſolence and impetuoſity of temper became intolerable to all about him, his principal officers were treated with inſults

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and indignities; moſt of theſe had been diſguſted with the family for the preference given to *Aliverdi Khan*, in the government of *Patna*; though juſtice could not lay this charge againſt *Suffraaz Khan*.

There then reſided at his court a *Gentoo* named *Allum Chund*, who had been many years Dewan to *Soujah Khan*, by whom he was much venerated for his great age, wiſdom and faithful ſervices. This miniſter was the only man who had courage and honeſty enough to attempt reſtraining the extravagances of *Suffraaz Khan*, a duty he thought owing to the memory of his late maſter; he accordingly, with the greateſt circumſpection and humility, and with tears in his eyes, repreſented to him the fatal tendency of his conduct, which if not changed, muſt inevitably eſtrange the hearts of the few remaining friends to his houſe, and at the ſame time favor and promote the evil deſigns of his enemies.

Suffraaz Khan, in place of profiting by this wholeſome remonſtrance and admonition, highly reſented his preſumption, and ever after treated him with great indignities and contempt, and thereby loſt the heart of the only man in the provinces, who by his ſincerity, capacity and authority, was

capable of counteracting and fruſtrating the pernicious machinations of *Hodjee* and his brother.

Though *Suffraaz Khan* did not immediately degrade *Hodjee Hamet* from the poſt of prime miniſter, yet he took every opportunity of ſhowing an inveterate hatred to him; in public *Durbar* he commonly called him by the appellation of, "His "father's pandet," and treated him with ſuch inſults and indignities, that he ſeldom frequented the *Durbar*, being ill able to brook ſuch treatment in a place where he had for ſo many years been accuſtomed to a degree of deference and reſpect, equal to his maſter; nor is it much to be wondered at, that he ſhould meditate vengeance, when a fair occaſion offered; this he was not long without; *Suffraaz Khan*'s own folly and raſhneſs ſupplied him with the means, and gave him a nearer, and more encouraging proſpect, of an *event* which he for ſome time paſt had in view.

A few months after *Suffraaz Khan* came to the government, he threw a diſgrace on *Futtuah Chund*'s houſe, which laid the foundation of his precipitate fall. The fact, though well known to a few, was only whiſpered, out of reſpect to the power and credit *Anno* 1739.

credit of that family, which had maintained even from the reign of *Aurung Zebe*, a character of diſtinguiſhed conſideration; from *Furrukshir*, *Futtuah Chund* received the title of *Jaggaut Seet*; and might be juſtly eſteemed the greateſt banker, and moſt opulent ſubject in the world.

Anno 1739. He had about this time married his youngeſt grandſon, named *Seet Mortab Roy*, to a young creature of exquiſite beauty, aged about eleven years. The fame of her beauty coming to the ears of the Soubah, he burned with curioſity and luſt for the poſſeſſion of her; and ſending for *Jaggaut Seet*, demanded a ſight of her—The old man (then compleat fourſcore) begged and intreated, that the Soubah would not ſtain the honor and credit of his houſe, nor load his laſt days with ſhame, by perſiſting in a demand which he knew the principles of *his caſt*, forbid a compliance with.

Neither the tears nor remonſtrances of the old man had any weight on the Soubah, who growing outrageous at his refuſal, ordered in his preſence his houſe to be immediately ſurrounded with a body of horſe, and ſwore on the *Khoran*, that if he complied in ſending his grand-daughter, that

that he might only *ſee her*, he would inſtantly return her without any injury.

The *Seet* reduced to this extremity, and judging from the Soubah's known impetuoſity, that his perſiſting longer in a denial, would only make his diſgrace *more public*, at laſt conſented; and the young creature was carried with the greateſt ſecrecy in the night to viſit him. She was returned the ſame night, we will ſuppoſe (for the honor of that houſe) uninjured; be this as it may, the violence was of too delicate a nature, to permit any future commerce between her and her huſband.

The indignity was never forgiven by *Jaggaut Seet*, and that whole powerful family, conſequently became inveterate, tho' concealed enemies to the Soubah.

Hodjee Hamet ſoon came to the knowledge of this raſh ſtep and violence committed againſt the *Seets*; he was alſo well apprized of *Allum Chund*'s diſguſt, and, as he was upon a friendly footing with them both, he determined to avail himſelf of their reſentment, and make it ſubſervient to his own intended vengeance for the repeated inſults he had received from the Soubah. Revenge however was not his ſole motive;

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he was actuated by another, yet more prevalent, the further aggrandiſing his family; the hopes of which he had hitherto only ſeen at a diſtance, but now thought the conjuncture favorable for carrying his long projected plan into execution; which was to cut off the ſon of his late *maſter, friend* and *benefactor*, and place his brother *Aliverdi Khan* in his ſtead.

Hadjee loſt no time in procuring a private conference with the diſ-affected *Seets* and *Allum Chund*; in the courſe of which he repreſented in the moſt lively manner, the "oppreſſion and extravagant government of "*Suffraaz Khan*, and that nothing but the "moſt deplorable conſequences to the "provinces could be expected from ſuch "an unbridled and tyrannic diſpoſition— "that if he already treated with ſuch in- "ſults and contempt, thoſe for whom his "father had the higheſt veneration and "friendſhip—what might not others dread "from his future violences?"—He then expatiated on, and with bitter exaggeration painted their own particular injuries, which had all the effect upon them that he might naturally expect or could wiſh.

He ſuffered not their reſentment to cool, but ſupported this conference with many others;

others; and the unanimous concluſion of the triumvirate was; "That none could "be ſecure in their lives, honor or pro- "perty, whilſt *Suſfraaz Khan* remained "inveſted with the Soubahſhip!"—*Hodjee* managed the paſſions of theſe men with ſuch art and addreſs in the promotion of his own views——that they themſelves firſt propoſed, "his brother *Aliverdi Khan*, "as the only one capable of reſcuing the "provinces from apparent and inevitable "ruin——That he ſhould be immediately "adviſed of their ſentiments, and intreated "to concur with their hopes by preparing "for a ſpeedy march into *Bengal*, to take "upon him the government."

Hodjee, with expreſſions of gratitude for their favorable opinion of his brother, conſented to their propoſal with a well diſſembled reluctance; declaring, "nothing but "the neceſſity of the time, and the peril "of the country could have influenced "him to meditate aught againſt the ſon "of his late maſter."

It being objected by *Jaggaut Seet*, that an intercourſe by letter with *Aliverdi* was liable to accident and diſcovery, it was on further deliberation reſolved, that *Hodjee* ſhould repair to *Patna*, where he could better inform

inform his brother of the ſtate of things, and benefit him by his council at this critical period; but as his ſudden and private retreat from court would raiſe a ſuſpicion in the Soubah, that ſomething was in agitation againſt him, *Allum Chund* and *Jaggant Seet* engaged to make his departure an act of the Soubah's own weakneſs.

The plan of operations being thus agreed on, their next ſtep was to engage in the conſpiracy the Soubah's *Tope Khennah Derogher* (or maſter of his ordnance) with ſeveral other diſaffected officers, which was very ſoon accompliſhed.——It was a ſaying of a great and brave king, "that one drop "of honey caught and engaged more "flies, than a ton of vinegar." *Suffraaz Khan* in place of ſweetneſs of diſpoſition and affability, unhappily ſubſtituted a moroſe, ſevere and inſolent carriage to all around him, which (at this moſt important juncture) left him not more than two or three officers of any conſideration, who bore the leaſt attachment to his perſon, family or government.

Matters becoming thus ripe for execution, *Hodjee* began to grow impatient for an interview with his brother, and urged the

promiſe made to him by *Allum Chund* and *Jaggaut Seet*, of procuring his diſmiſſion from the capital.

Theſe embraced the firſt opportunity, when the Soubah was according to cuſtom reviling *Hodjee* (then abſent) in public *Durbar*, to repreſent to him, that it was a diſgrace to his court the ſuffering *Hodjee* to appear there, conſidering the infamous employ he bore under his father.—"Drive "him (continued they) from your preſence, court and city; and let him go "to his ungrateful brother." This council being echoed and applauded by the *Tope Khonnah Derogher*, and others in the confederacy, the unwary Soubah inſtantly ſent an order to *Hodjee Hamet* to quit the provinces, who not thinking it prudent to wait for a ſecond order, departed without delay, and made the beſt of his way to *Patna*, where in a few days he arrived with ſome of his faithful attendants.

Suffraaz Khan, by this falſe ſtep, relinquiſhed and deprived himſelf of the great ſecurity he had in his hands, for the good behaviour of *Aliverdi Khan*, whoſe ambition he had cauſe enough to think, would not ſtop with the Nabobſhip of *Patna*,

and he ought to have ſeen that the ſureſt means of checking its career, was the detention of *Hodjee*.

On *Hodjee*'s arrival at *Patna*, he painted the whole conduct of the Soubah in the moſt hideous colours; he employed his whole art and eloquence in the exaggeration of the indignities himſelf had endured; he told his brother that he might reſt aſſured "*Suffraaz Khan* could never "forget, nor forgive his obtaining the go-"vernment of *Bahar*, independant of the "Soubahſhip, whereby ſo large a portion "of the revenues was lopt from himſelf "and family; that he was from good au-"thority convinced, the Soubah only waited "a favorable occaſion to cut him off, "and ſeize and reunite his government to "the Soubahſhip, to which purpoſe he "knew he had forwarded diſpatches to "court;—that he had gone too far to ſtop, "that *Suffraaz Khan* was univerſally de-"teſted in the provinces, and finally that "no ſecurity for himſelf and family re-"mained, but in aſſuming the whole Sou-"bahdary, which he might do with very "little difficulty."

Hodjee

Hodjee then opened to his brother, the progreſs he had made in this neceſſary ſtep below, recited the ſeveral conferences he had with the *Seets* and *Allum Chund*, and the reſult of their deliberations, recounting at the ſame time the names of the Soubah's officers, who had declared themſelves wholly devoted to his promotion to the *Muzinud*.

It was ſaid, *Aliverdi* expreſſed much compunction on this overture being firſt made to him, to diſpoſſeſs the ſon of his maſter and benefactor; but if we form our concluſion from his *Actions*, both antecedent and ſubſequent to this period, we ſhall have no foundation to encourage our belief in that report; for if he really had at firſt any ſcruples to combat with, it is certain he very ſoon ſubdued them; and determined to march into *Bengal*; of which full advice was immediately diſpatched to their confederate friends there.

It was however thought eligible, that *Suffraaz Khan* ſhould be lulled into ſecurity; to which end, *Aliverdi* (at the time he was levying additional troops) wrote the moſt ſubmiſſive letter to him,—"aſſuring "him he was as much the ſlave of his "houſe, as he was in the time of his

" father; humbly intreating his permiſſion
" to throw himſelf at his feet, and plead
" the cauſe of his unfortunate brother,
" who, he had with grief learned, had in-
" curred his diſpleaſure, hoping by his
" perſonal ſupplications, his unhappy bro-
" ther would be reſtored to the Soubah's
" favor *."

He departed from *Patna* the latter end of the year 1741, at the head of about 30,000 horſe and foot; leaving his brother *Hodjee Hamet*, his Niab, or deputy governor of *Bahar*. We will leave *Aliverdi* on his march, and return to the court of the Soubah.

Suffraaz Khan had yet about his perſon three officers of diſtinction, that remained faithful to his intereſt——though from different motives; their names were *Muſſat Khooli Khan*, *Goas Khan*, and *Banteer Ali Khan*; (more commonly known by the name of *Baaker Ali Khan*) the firſt, was married to a ſiſter of the Soubah, and appointed Nabob of *Oriſſa*, for which govern-

* This was the ſpecious pretext publicly avowed for *Aliverdi*'s march into *Bengal*, which he began ſoon after the diſpatch of the above letter, and before he could poſſibly receive any reply to it.

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ment he was in a few days to ſet out, with a ſmall body of troops.—His intereſt connected him firmly to the Soubah, on whoſe well being his own fortunes depended.

The other two had been proved faithful ſervants to *Soujah Khan*, and were attached to the preſent Soubah, more from principles of gratitude, honor, and affection to the memory of their old maſter, than to any love they could poſſibly bear to himſelf—they ſupported the character of brave officers, were in conſiderable commands under the Vice-roy, and in truth were the only perſons in his court, for whom he obſerved the leaſt reſpect or regard.

Theſe officers, after the departure of *Hodjee*, had received imperfect intelligence of the frequent meetings of *Hodjee*, *Jaggaut Seet*, and *Allum Chund*, which they ventured to communicate to the Vice-roy, intimating at the ſame time their ſuſpicions, that ſuch meetings, compoſed of perſons, which they feared were diſaffected to his government, called for his attention; and adviſed the immediate ſeizure of the *Seets*, *Allum Chund*, and the commanding officer of the artillery; but *Suffraaz Khan*, doomed to deſtruction, hearkened not to theſe faithful

admonitions, which he treated as idle apprehenſions without any real foundation, thinking them friendly endeavours only to draw him from his pleaſures, which they had before attempted, but in vain.

By this fatal deluſion, the Soubah loſt the only opportunity of exerting that power which might have ſaved him from approaching ruin: the bold ſtep adviſed by *Goas* and *Baaker Khans*, of ſeizing thoſe heads of the conſpiracy, would have ſtruck terror into the whole party, and effectually put a ſtop to *Aliverdi*'s intended invaſion, and probably a period alſo to his hopes.

Aliverdi Khan followed the letter he wrote the Soubah, with ſuch expedition that he gained the paſs of *Siclygully*, and entered *Bengal* before the leaſt intimation of his departure from *Patna* reached the court of the Soubah.

The paſs of *Siclygully* divides the provinces of *Bengal* and *Bahar*, is of conſiderable length, and only about ten to twelve feet wide, ſituate on the top of a mountain, with a ſteep aſcent both ways; the courſe of the paſs is *North* and *South*, flanked to the *Weſtward* by an impenetrable wood,

wood, and to the *Eaſtward* by the principal branch of the river *Ganges*: thus circumſtanced it was capable of being defended by a ſmall number of men, but it was left unguarded by the infatuated *Suffraaz Khan*, and without any defence at all.

Aliverdi knew the importance of this paſs, and therefore determined by forced marches to gain the poſſeſſion of it, before it could poſſibly be put in a ſtate of defence ſufficient to oppoſe his entrance into *Bengal*; this he accompliſhed as above, and found it neceſſary to halt for ſome days to refreſh his fatigued troops.

On the firſt advice that the Nabob of *Patna* had paſſed *Siclygully*, the court of the Soubah was ſtruck with the deepeſt conſternation, every one ſeeing further into the conſequences of his approach, than the unhappy and ſhort ſighted *Suffraaz Khan*; who having at firſt no conception, that *Aliverdi* was at the head of an army, expreſſed only high rage and reſentment at his daring to enter the province without his permiſſion.—But when ſoon after *Goas* and *Baaker Khans* informed him of the number of troops he had with him—and that they were convinced (by intelligence from ſpies they had

placed near his perſon) the deſign of *Aliverdi* was to depoſe him, it is impoſſible to paint his fury.—He immediately ſent for *Jaggaut Seet*, and *Allum Chund*, and demanded of them how they dared ſuffer ſuch a body of troops to enter the province, without giving early notice of it? urging that he knew ſuch a ſtep was not taken without their privacy and counſel.

The accuſed, who expected this attack, came prepared, having previouſly concerted their replies, leſt they ſhould have been ſeparately examined.—They ſuffered the Soubah's rage to expend itſelf in words, and then ſubmiſſively aſſured him "That "had there been the ſmalleſt foundation "for the belief of the reports falſly ſpread "of *Aliverdi Khan*, they would have been "the firſt of his ſlaves to adviſe him of "his danger.—That the forces of *Aliverdi* "were greatly exaggerated by ſome evil "minded people near the Soubah's perſon, "who were declared enemies to *Hodjee*'s "houſe. —— That *their* intelligence (on "which they could depend) ſaid, he was "only accompanied by his common at-"tendants, and a ſmall guard to defend "him againſt the petty Rajahs, and free-"booters of the mountains. — That they

"were

" were themſelves perfectly ſatisfied, the " conduct of *Aliverdi* was greatly miſre- " preſented; and that his only deſign was " to throw himſelf at the Soubah's feet, " and plead the cauſe of his unhappy diſ- " graced brother *Hadjee Hamet*."

To corroborate this ſpecious and deceitful harangue, they each produced letters from *Aliverdi*, and from other ſeemingly indifferent perſons in his train, calculated purpoſely to ſupport the deceptions, which being compared with others, wrote to the Soubah from *Siclygully*, he was thereby again lulled into a ſtupid ſecurity, and was influenced ſo far by the combined traitors, as to cenſure *Goas Khan*, and *Baaker Ali Khan*, as aiming to ſtir up troubles and a war in the province, that they might benefit themſelves in the confuſion.

We left *Aliverdi Khan* to the *Southward* of *Siclygully* paſs, halting to refreſh his troops after their fatiguing march.—Here he met with an impediment, that was well nigh making his whole ſcheme prove abortive.

His principal Jemmautdaars, officers and ſoldiers, had been promiſed four months advanced pay, (beſides their old arrears) and

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a gratuity of three Lacs of Rupees as ſoon as they entered the province of *Bengal*.—The Jemmautdaars in a body preſented themſelves before the Nabob, and demanded the promiſed pay and gratuity for themſelves and their people, declaring if it was with-held from them, they would not march a foot further.

This demand threw *Aliverdi* into the utmoſt perplexity, knowing his inability to comply with it; for what with the large bribes remitted to *Delhy*, for the purchaſe of his independant government of *Babar*, and other conſiderable ſums juſt diſburſed, to corrupt and keep firm the principal officers in the ſervice of the Soubah; his coffers were drained, and at a very low ebb.

However, without diſcovering the difficulty he was under, he with his uſual dignity, and a voice of authority, "ordered them to withdraw, and wait without, "and they ſhould be ſatisfied."—Then calling a private *Durbar*, conſiſting of his Dewan *Chinkumunny*, and a few of his chief confidants, he "informed them of the "demand of his Jemmautdaars," and repreſented in lively colours, "the riſque "himſelf

" himſelf and they ran, of being deliver-
" ed up to *Suffraaz Khan*, unleſs ſome
" expedient was deviſed to raiſe to the
" amount of three Lacs, with which he
" doubted not to quiet them for the pre-
" ſent." To this the Dewan replied, the whole ſum in his hands did not exceed 45000 Rupees, and that he knew of no means of raiſing more.—

This unfavourable report of the Dewan, proved a ſevere ſhock to *Aliverdi* and his adherents.—Various alternatives were (as uſual in theſe caſes) propoſed, without any having the appearance of ſucceeding: amongſt the reſt, it was ſtrenuouſly urged by the Dewan, that an expreſs ſhould be ſent to *Jaggaut Seet*; but this was oppoſed by the Nabob,—who aſſerted, " ſuch a de-
" lay would prove fatal to the whole en-
" terprize."—And he was juſt on the point of reſolving to retreat with thoſe troops he could depend on; when the *evil genius* of *Suffraaz Khan*, in the perſon of one of *Aliverdi*'s followers, conciliated all matters by a device, which merits being particularly recited.

There were two brothers, merchants of *Patna*, well known by the names of *Omy Chund*,

Chund, and *Diep Chund*: the former of theſe now attended the camp, and was generally of *Aliverdi*'s private councils, and much in his confidence.

One of the occupations of this *Omy Chund*, was to advance occaſionally ready money to the officers and ſoldiers at a very high premium; this is an allowed practice in all Eaſtern camps, and poſſibly, at leaſt for aught we know, it may be the practice in the Weſtern alſo—however, the greatneſs of the riſque certainly juſtifies the largeneſs of the premium, for the repayment not only depends upon the lives of the borrowers, but alſo upon their ſucceſs.

Omy Chund had brought with him only 20,000 rupees, for this game at hazard: he deſired the Nabob would order his Dewan to pay him immediately the 45,000 rupees, which were in his hands; which being complied with, he inſtructed the Nabob, "To call in the Jemmautdaars —— and "order them to bring in an account of "their reſpective claims, and to tell them "that he would give them draughts on "*Omy Chund*, taking care to give billets "firſt to thoſe who had the ſmalleſt ſums to "receive, and that in the cloſe of the "evening

"evening he ſhould (on preſence of freſh "intelligence by his ſpies that *Suffraas* "*Khan* was in full march towards him) "cauſe the *Nobut* to be beat, and iſſue his "orders for engaging the enemy early in "the morning, and leave the reſt to him."

The Jemmautdaars were called and ordered to bring in their claims, which they did in leſs than an hour, for they generally have them ready made up on a ſcrap of paper, which they depoſit either in their girdle or turband. When all the claims were laid before the Nabob—he ordered his Dewan to give them billets upon *Omy Chund*; the Dewan, according to private inſtructions, made what delay he could, not to occaſion ſuſpicion, and gave thoſe firſt who had the leaſt to receive.

When the Jemmautdaars tendered their billets to *Omy Chund*, he paid ſeveral of the leaſt conſiderable ſums readily, and without any deductions; then, as he had accounts to ſettle with moſt of them, he prolonged the time by many artful blunders and deſigned errors, until the day was far ſpent, and not more than one eighth part of their accounts adjuſted, then excuſing himſelf on account of the great fa-

tigue

tigue he had undergone, deferred the further payments until the next morning.

As ſoon as the day cloſed, *Aliverdi* ordered the *Nobut* to be beat, and iſſued out his commands to his *Jemmautdaars* to hold themſelves in readineſs for engaging the next day, telling them that *Suffraaz Khan*'s army was not far diſtant.

This unexpected alarm had the effect, which *Omy Chund* had foreſeen; thoſe who had received the amount of their billets, in all haſte returned it into his cuſtody, and the others depoſited their billets in his hands; in the morning the Nabob reſumed his march, taking the rout to *Morſhadabad*, keeping up the alarm and expectance of a battle, until he in reality encountered the Soubah, to whom we once again return.

Baaker Ali Khan and *Goas Khan*, receiving hourly freſh intelligence from their ſpies of *Aliverdi*'s motions, and the number of his forces, had ſtill the courage to repreſent to the Soubah, the danger his perſon and government were in——and humbly beſought him, "to provide for "ſafety whilſt in his power;" urging "that if the deſigns of *Aliverdi* were

"honour-

" honourable, the moſt eligible way to " preſerve him in thoſe ſentiments, was " to let him ſee he was in a condition and " poſture to oppoſe and cruſh him. That " if on the contrary the deſigns of *Aliverdi* " were aimed againſt the government, " his ſupine conduct muſt inevitably ſe- " cure his ſucceſs. That from the face " of *their* intelligence, and the whole " procedure of *Aliverdi*, they had no room " to doubt the wickedneſs of his inten- " tions."

Theſe remonſtrances joined to advices the Soubah had himſelf received of the *real* number of *Aliverdi*'s troops, at laſt rouſed him from his ſtupor, and he directly ordered his Jemmautdaars and forces to take the field, and rendezvous in the plains of *Gyria*, about three miles to the North of *Morſhadabad*, himſelf following the next morning. He had hardly time to marſhal his troops in order of battle, when *Aliverdi*'s army appeared.

Their force was nearly equal, each about 30,000 men, 20,000 foot, and 10,000 horſe; *Suffraaz Khan* had twenty pieces of artillery from twelve to ſix and four pounders; *Aliverdi* had none.

Suffraaz

Sirfraz Khan planted his cannon in his front, with ſtrict orders not to fire until the enemy advanced within half muſket ſhot, for on his artillery he relied ſecure of victory—*Aliverdi* ordered his troops to receive the diſcharge of the cannon, and then to ruſh in upon the Soubah's army ſword in hand; he iſſued theſe orders with great ſecurity, for he and his troops knew that by the treachery of the *Tope Khonnah Droger*, the cannon were loaded with powder only. He alſo iſſued his inſtructions to his officers, to regard nothing but attacking thoſe poſts, which were commanded by *Muſſaf Khoolt Khan*, *Baaker Ali Khan*, and *Goat Khan*, well knowing that none of the Soubah's troops or officers would engage, but thoſe which were immediately under their command.

When the engagement began, all but five or ſix thouſand of the Soubah's troops ſtood idle ſpectators of the battle; *Aliverdi*'s beſt troops advanced without the leaſt apprehenſion, ſtood the diſcharge of artillery, and vigorouſly attacked the diviſion of *Baaker Ali Khan*, (behind which the Soubah was ſtationed) they were twice repulſed with much ſlaughter; but *Baaker Ali*'s troops being over-powered by freſh numbers,

Goss Khan penetrating to the center of the enemy, with a few brave followers, was now fighting desperately with his own hand, when *Sadoc Khan*, commander of his Elephants, interposed and disarmed him, obliging *Goss Khan* to retire with his command, who soon after, surrounded by *Aliverdi's* troops, and disdaining to accept quarter, were to a man killed.

Musse Khan Khan, and the troops under his command, for some time exerted themselves with great courage and fidelity in defence of the Soubah's person, who being now for the first time informed of the treachery of the *Tope Khanah Dogha*, and the defection and perfidy of most of his officers and troops, and that he was betrayed on all hands, and learning also the fates of his two faithful generals, he ordered "*Musse*"*fah Khan Khan* to retire from the battle, "to make the best retreat he could to "*Cuttack*, and save if possible the pro"vince of *Oriffa* from the traytor and "usurper *Aliverdi*;" telling him "he saw "it was vain for him alone to attempt "stemming the current of his adverse for-

with a ſmall faithful party remain'd, and eluded the purſuit of the enemy.

The Seedeh, thus abandoned, determined it ſhould ſeem, to effect by a glorious death the remembrance of his inglorious life. At this juncture it was, that the leader of his elephant propoſed to him to retire to the capital, "telling him that he would "engage on the forfeiture of his head, to "convey him ſafe there, where he had "ſtill ſome friends that would be able to "make a ſtand for him;" but he nobly replied, "it never ſhould be ſaid that "*Suffraz Khan* fled from rebels and traytors." And ordered him to plunge into the thickeſt of the enemy, where with a few of his guards, that yet remained ſteady to him, he for ſome time maintained an obſtinate engagement—like an enraged lion he fought to a degree of deſperation; it was ſaid he emptied a whole quiver of arrows, and diſcharged more than a dozen javelins, beſides the execution he did with the fire arms he had with him, on the elephant: but at laſt being weary with ſlaughter, and not able any longer to lift an arm; a period was put to his life and fortune, by a muſket ball from a diſtance, ſaid to be

 diſcharged

discharged by one of his own people; with this wound he fell down from his elephant, and with his death the combat ceased.

Thus fell the son of *Sarfaz Khan*, testifying by his exit from life, that he poſſeſſed a ſoul capable of producing great actions, had the ſoil been early and properly cultivated.

Aliverdi Khan poſſeſſed himſelf of the late Soubah's tent and baggage, the plunder of which amounting to between nine and ten lacs of rupees, he beſtowed upon his principal officers and ſoldiers. He received *Sarfaz Khan*'s perfidious officers and ſoldiers into his ſervice, and marching to the capital, entered it without reſiſtance through the acclamations of the people; proceeding to the palace, he ſeated himſelf upon the *Maſnud*, and received the ſubmiſſion of the Rajahs, Jemmautdaars, and other great officers, who acknowledged and ſaluted him Soubah of the *Three provinces*. Anno 1742.

The fate of one of the three principal conſpirators, having ſomething remarkable in it, calls for our particular mention. *Allum Chund* returned from the inveſting *Aliverdi* to his own houſe, and being bit-

verly reproached by his wife, for his perfidy and treaſon to the ſon of his prince and maſter, and predicting "that he would "ſhortly receive from the *uſurper* the re-"ward due to every *traytor*," was thereby ſo much affected, that he ſwallowed diamond powder, and in a few hours expired.

Aliverdi Khan entertaining no favourable opinion of the military proweſs and capacity of the *Bengal* ſoldiery, and having ſo very lately ſeen a glaring proof of their natural perfidy, as well as cowardice, in the unhappy fall of his predeceſſor, determined to put no truſt or confidence in them, and to guard againſt their treachery, which he knew might be eaſily purchaſed againſt him, as it had been for him; entertained immediately in his ſervice a ſelect body of three thouſand *Patans*, with their commander *Muſtapha Khan*; a ſoldier of fortune, who about this time arrived in *Bengal* with recommendatory letters from court: he bore the character of a conſummate general, and his ſubſequent actions verified the report.—Theſe new troops the Soubah kept always on duty near his perſon, and their chief was admitted to his councils and favor.

His next ſtep was to diſplace all officers throughout the provinces that he had reaſon to think retained any affection to the late Soubah's houſe, and when he thought himſelf ſecure againſt all attempts that might endanger his newly acquired government, he appointed a Niab *pro tempore*, for the government of *Babar* and its capital, and recalled his brother *Hodjee Hamet*, that he might benefit himſelf of his counſel and aſſiſtance in his arduous ſituation.

Hodjee being arrived, all matters were debated and concerted relative to the government of the provinces; *Hodjee* was inveſted with the government of *Morſhadabad* in the abſence of his brother, who without delay took the field, and directed his rout towards *Oriſſa*, on the thirtieth of *March*, 1742 *.—We will leave the Soubah on his march, and for a few minutes attend on the Nabob of *Oriſſa*.

This fugitive and unfortunate brother in law to the late Soubah, (with whom I was

* *Suffraaz Khan*'s defeat and death was on the twenty-eighth of *January*, 1741-2, and not on the thirtieth of *March*, 1742, as the author of the Reflections erroneouſly ſays, confounding the date of one event with another.

intimately acquainted) escaped from the battle with a few followers, as before recited; he in a few days reached the capital of *Oriſſa*, where many of the friends of *Suffraaz Khan's* houſe reſorted to him. He made ſome attempts to fortify, and inliſt troops for the defence of the place; but being ill ſupplied with cannon and ammunition, and receiving certain intelligence of the uſurper's approach, with a very ſuperiour force to his own, he thought it prudent to provide for his own ſafety, by retreating out of the province with his family, departing from *Kuttack* four days before the Soubah's van-guard reached it, and found an aſylum in the *Deccan*, under *Nizzaam Al Mulk*.

Kuttack opened its gates to the Uſurper, but he had ſcarcely ſettled the government of *Oriſſa*, when he was alarmed with the news, that an army of 80,000 *Mahrattor* horſe had entered the province of *Bengal*, by a paſſage over the *Bierbohem* hills, and had already penetrated into the *Burdomaan* country.

The Uſurper received this unexpected ſhock with manifeſt aſtoniſhment; he immediately ſaw not only his retreat, but every communication with his brother and

his

hit capital cut off. In this diſtreſs we will leave him for a while, and inveſtigate as well the cauſe of this invaſion, as convey ſome idea of the people called *Mahrattars*, who for a few years laſt paſt, have been as much the dread and terror of the Eaſt, as the *Goths* and *Vandals* of old were of the Weſt; with this eſſential difference in their characters, that whereas *theſe* were the barbarous invaders of the rights and property of others; *theſe* are making juſtifiable efforts to recover *that*, which their anceſtors had been for ages in peaceable and juſt poſſeſſion of.

When the Empire of *Indoſtan* was invaded, and in part conquered by the Mogul *Tartars*, about the beginning of the fifteenth century; many of the Rajahs, or *Hindoo* princes of the country, ſubmitted with little oppoſition to the invaders, on condition of holding their lands and principalities, paying a ſtipulated annual tribute: But others of them, diſdaining this tributary ſtate of ſlavery, retired to the ſouthward, and poſſeſſing themſelves of the moſt ſouthern parts of *Decran*, they remained unmoleſted until about the year 1654, the latter end of the reign of the Emperor *Shaw Jehawn*.

His third ſon *Auring Zebe*, being at that period Soubah of the *Decan*, (or ſouth) made a fruitleſs attempt on *Golconda*, inſtigated thereto by *Mhir Jemla*, who revolted to him from the then reigning Rajah of that famous city, and the adjoining country.

Auring Zebe, ſucceeding to the throne of *Indoſtan*, in the year 1659, purſued by his Generals his former deſigns againſt the independant Rajahs on the coaſt of *Cormandel*, guided chiefly by the counſel and inſtructions of *Mhir Jemla*; by whoſe valour *Golconda* was reduced, and the whole coaſt ſubdued, from *Ganjam* to *Coleroon* river, that is, from the latitude of 11°. 40'. to 19°. 30'. north.

The other promontory of *India*, called the coaſt of *Mallabar*, from the borders of the province of *Guzerat* to cape *Comorin*, was never conquered by the Mogul Emperors; but the independant poſſeſſion of it, was maintained by various Rajahs, the chief of whom was the Rajah of *Sittarab*.

To *theſe* independant princes, the diſtreſſed and diſpoſſeſſed Rajahs of *Cormandel* applied for ſuccour: *They*, alarmed at the

the rapid progreſs of the Mogul arms, immediately united themſelves under the banners of the Rajah of *Sittarah*.

Theſe united princes and people, are thoſe which are known by the general name of *Mabarattors*, a word compounded of *Rattor* and *Maabab*; the firſt being the name of a particular *Raazpoot* (or *Rajpoot*) tribe, and the latter, ſignifying *great* or mighty, (as explained by Mr. *Fraſer*) a term we have had occaſion to make uſe of before, and frequently ſhall again.

The acquiſitions thus gained to the Empire by the Generals of *Auring Zebe*, coſt ſo much blood and treaſure, that the diamond mines of *Golconda* hardly proved an equivalent; for the confederate princes made ſuch vigorous efforts to regain what they had loſt, that *Auring Zebe* was obliged to keep up ſo large an armament, that the expence of preſerving his new conqueſt exceeded the whole revenues acquired by it; the glorious vanity, however, of having carried his conqueſts of this Empire further than any of his predeceſſors, determined him not to abandon them, until finding at laſt, he ſhould riſque the loſs of the whole, he began to meditate coming

to

to a treaty with them, which reſolution was haſtened by ſeveral bold attacks, made on different parts of his dominions by the *Mabarattors* at the ſame time.—On the ſide of his new ſouthern acquiſitions, they carried fire and ſword ſometimes into the province of *Dowlatabad*, and attacked the capital *Auringabad*, and from *Sittarah* they penetrated through the province of *Guzerat*, and ſometimes alarmed even the court of *Delhy*, ſtriking a panick wherever they came.

Auring Zebe, ſeeing at length, no proſpect of extending his conqueſts farther over theſe intrepid natives; thought it a wiſe meaſure to ſecure, and keep if poſſible, what he had got.—To this end, he entered into a treaty with the confederate Rajahs, and by a ſecret valuable conſideration given to the *Sehoo* Rajah, King of *Sittarah*, a peace was concluded between them on the following terms. "That "*Auring Zebe* ſhould remain in quiet "poſſeſſion of his ſouthern conqueſts as "far as the river *Coleroon*, before mention-"ed, and the port of *Surat*; and that in "lieu thereof, the *Mabarattors* ſhould re-"ceive, and be intitled to, for ever, a "*Chout* (that is, the fourth part) of the

"reve-

"revenues of *Decsen*" to which *Soubahſhip*, theſe new ſouthern conqueſts were annexed by the Emperor.

Thus a period was put to a war, that had chiefly employed the attention of near two thirds of *Auring Zebe*'s long and fortunate reign, by which, ſo important an addition of territory and revenue was obtained, that had it been duly and honeſtly governed and adminiſtered, and the treaty kept inviolate on both ſides, would have yielded a perpetual ſource of riches to all ſucceeding Emperors, on every emergency of the ſtate.

As long as *Auring Zebe* lived, the *Chout* was duely paid to the *Maharattors*, but on his deceaſe the treaty began to be infringed, though it ſuffered no open rupture until the death of *Shaw Allum*, when the Empire falling into a ſtate of univerſal confuſion, (by the contentions that aroſe between his ſons for the ſucceſſion to the throne, and by the ſubſequent diſtractions during the deſpotic tyranny of the *Seyds*) little regard was paid to it on the part of the government.

Things

Things being in this ſituation, the *Mahartors* determined to pay themſelves, by making incurſions on different ſides of the Empire, and laying the city of *Surat* under contribution; in which warfare they met with ſuch ſucceſs from the continued puſillanimity and diſtraction of the government, that at length, they extended their claim and demand from the ſtipulated *Choût* of the revenues of the *Deccan*, to a *Choût* of the whole revenues of the Empire.

However, when *Mahommed Shaw*, by the overthrow of the *Seyds*, arrived to the ſecure poſſeſſion of the throne, *Anno* 1719, ſome check was put to their invaſions; and terms of accommodation being made to them, they for ſome years acquieſced to the terms of *Auring Zebe*'s treaty, and annually received the *Choût* of the revenues of the *Deccan*, by their agents out of the royal treaſury at *Delhy*, long after theſe revenues had loſt their way to court by the uſurpation and independance of the traytor *Nizam Al Mulk*.

In the year 1740, the deputies of the King of *Sittarah*, arrived as uſual at *Delhy* to receive the *Choût*, when they were given to underſtand, "That *Nadir Shaw* had "lately

" lately ſo exhauſted the treaſury, that the " Emperor was rendered utterly incapable " of ſatisfying their demands; the more " eſpecially, as the revenues of the *Ben-* " *gal* provinces had been witheld from " the year 1738, by the rebellion of " *Aliverdi Khan*, who, in conjunction with " his brother *Hadjee Hamet*, had uſurped " the government of that Soubahdary; re- " queſting that the deputies would intreat " their maſter in the Emperor's name, to " ſend an army of ſufficient force to exact " the amount of the *Chaut*, that was due " to them; and alſo to take the heads of " *Aliverdi* and his brother, and reſtore the " family of *Soujah Khan* to the Soubahſhip, " as the then diſtracted ſtate of the Empire " put it out of his power to ſend a force " ſtrong enough to reduce the two rebels."

With this anſwer, and *actual powers* from the *Emperor*, the deputies departed for *Sittarah*.—A fact that fully confutes the aſſertion of *Aliverdi*'s having received a *Phirmaund*, confirming him in the government; as was publiſhed by beat of drum, and induſtriouſly circulated by the *Seets* the latter end of the year 1739 *.

The

* *Aliverdi* ſitting in ſtate a whole day to receive the ſham *Phirmaund*, with the uſual ceremonials on ſuch oc-

The *Maharatter* deputies arriving at his [illegible] reported the refult of their deputation, and the Emperor's request. The King of *Sittarab* did not ruminate long what refolution to take; he now had obtained a juftifiable plea to attack the Mogul's dominions with his own participation; therefore, without lofs of time, ordered an army of 80000 horfe to take the field, and march into *Bengal*, under the command of *Boſchar Pundit*, a general of fome reputation, and favorite of the *Sebeo* Rajah King of *Sittarab*. This general and army we left in the *Burdomaan* country between the uſurper and his capital; to whom we

occafions; but this is a farce that has been *fince* played in *fome parts* of the province of *Bengal*, and laughed at, as much as it was then.—For the *Sects* could always *cook up* a *Phirmaund* from court when ever it was *wanted*. That *Aliverdi* was *never* confirmed in the government by a *real Phirmaund*, is a fact that admits of no doubt; and it is well known, that fo late as *June*, *Anno* 1750, the Vizir *Monſoor Ali Khan*, (father of *Soujah Doulat*, the preſent Soubah of *Oude*) was advanced at the head of 100,000 horfe, within eight days march of *Patna*, purpofely to reſtore theſe fo long difmembered provinces to the Empire, and punifh the uſurper;—but differences arifing between the young Emperor *Amet Shaw*, (fon and fucceffor to *Mahammad Shaw*) and Rajah *Jut Sing*, the Vizir was recalled from this fervice, or as others more probably faid, his retreat was bought off by *Aliverdi*, at the price of fifty Lac of Rupees.

must

must again return, and point out the errors that drew him into the perilous situation and distresses we left him in, before we shew how bravely he extricated himself from it.

Some short time before he departed from *Murshedabad*, a slight rumour prevailed of the intended invasion of the *Mahrattors*, to which no credit was given either by the usurper or his brother; but slight as the report was, it ought to have merited their attention at a juncture when he was departing with all the strength of the provinces to the most extream part of his government; and as he must have known, no enemy could enter the province of *Bengal*, so as to cut off his communication with his capital, but by the western hills of *Bierbobeem*, prudence dictated that he should have secured the fidelity of the Rajahs of *Bierbobeem* and *Bishnapore*, who were alone capable of harrassing and retarding, if not of preventing the *Mahrattor* army entering from that quarter.

But (as if Fortune had purposed, that the neglect of this wise precaution should be conducive to the higher exaltation of the character of this her favorite son) so far

fat were the brothers from adverting to the neceſſity of ſuch a ſecurity in his reſt, that both theſe Rajahs had been highly in-cenſed by ſome acts of oppreſſion exerciſed towards them ſoon after *Aliverdi's* uſurpation of the government, and were readily diſpoſed, in place of obſtructing the enemy, to give them a free entrance into the heart of *Bengal*, which they did without the leaſt oppoſition; though in purſuing their reſentment, they entailed a long ſeries of heavy calamities on their unhappy country.

We left *Aliverdi Khan* at *Cuttack*, in deep aſtoniſhment at the news of this dangerous invaſion. Without diſcovering the leaſt apprehenſion or alarm, he withdrew for the ſpace of half an hour, in conſultation only with *Muſtapha Khan*, then ordered his people to prepare for marching; he quitted *Cuttack* the ſame day, and by forced marches reached near *Burdwan*, the principal town of *Burdomaan*, (within five days march of the capital) two days after the *Maharattors* took poſſeſſion of it: Here he intrenched himſelf, and was ſoon ſurrounded by the enemy, and though they had at leaſt the ſuperiority of eight to one, they had not the courage to attack him.

Boſchar

Seydee Pundit, however, ſent *Ambajee* [illegible] nature of the powers he was [illegible] with, demanding "three years arrears of the *Chout*, the "treaſures of the two late *Soubahs*, and "that in future, an officer of their own "ſhould have a ſeat in every Cutcherry "throughout the provinces, to collect the "fourth part of the cuſtoms on their be-"half."

The uſurper received theſe *terms* with the higheſt indignation and impatience; inſtantly commanding the meſſenger to leave his camp, without deigning to ſend any reply to *them*; and finding by the propoſitions made to him, that there remained ſmall hope of effecting any accommodation with the *Mahratter* General; he determined to make one vigorous effort, to break through the enemy, and regain a communication with his brother; to this reſolution he was ſtimulated, by obſerving a univerſal panic amongſt his *Bengal* troops, many of whom deſerted him by favour of the night.

In purſuance of this reſolve, he iſſued the neceſſary orders, omitting nothing that could ſpeak the conſummate General, pro-

fat were the brothers from adverting to the neceſſity of ſuch a ſecurity in his rear, that both theſe Rajahs had been highly incenſed by ſome acts of oppreſſion exerciſed towards them ſoon after *Aliverdi's* uſurpation of the government, and were readily diſpoſed, in place of obſtructing the enemy, to give them a free entrance into the heart of *Bengal*, which they did without the leaſt oppoſition; though in purſuing their reſentment, they entailed a long ſeries of heavy calamities on their unhappy country.

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The usurper received these *terms* with the highest indignation and impatience; instantly commanding the messenger to leave his camp, without deigning to send any reply to *them*; and finding by the propositions made to him, that there remained small hope of effecting any accommodation with the *Mahrattor* General; he determined to make one vigorous effort, to break through the enemy, and regain a communication with his brother; to this resolution he was stimulated, by observing a universal panic amongst his *Bengal* troops, many of whom deserted him by favour of the night.

In pursuance of this resolve, he issued the necessary orders, omitting nothing that could speak the consummate General, pro-

 mising

ſuffer's moſt liberal rewards to thoſe who ſhould excel in this exigency the character of a ſoldier; and well knowing that his principal dependance reſted upon the *Patans*, he beſtowed the higheſt encomiums and promiſes on that body, by whom he began to be loved and revered, being themſelves brave, they admired thoſe intrepid qualities in *Aliverdi*, which ſo nearly reſembled their own.

All things being prepared, the uſurper directed that part of the trench to be levelled with the utmoſt ſilence, which looked towards *Cutwah*. Then putting himſelf with *Muſtapha Khan* at the head of the *Patans* half an hour before day break, marched out, and with amazing courage charged that part of the enemy that intercepted his rout towards the laſt mentioned town.

His rear being compoſed intirely of his *Bengal* troops, (then eſteemed the worſt ſoldiers of the Empire) were ſoon ſurrounded and put to flight; but the *Patans* exhibited a glorious effort; theſe led on (as before obſerved) by the *Seubah*, and their gallant chief *Muſtapha*, their rear commanded by the brave *Zeyndi Amet Khan*,

Khan, (*Haidar's* second son) with much slaughter of the enemy, and passed the *Cutwah* road. In the course of which, they maintained a most memorable retreat for near three days and nights; being often surrounded and attacked on all sides, by the whole *Mahratter* army, and as often repulsing and forcing their passage until they arrived at *Cutwah*.

At this place the usurper mustered his troops, and found that of 25000 fighting men, with which he departed from his capital, he had only remaining 2500 *Patans*, and about 1500 of his *Bengal* soldiers, including their officers; these last named troops, stimulated by the example of the *Patans*, and the intrepid behaviour of their Jemmautdaar *Jaffier Khan* *, were kept firm to their duty.

At *Cutwah*, *Alverdi*, found it necessary to halt for a short space to refresh his harrassed troops, who during the term of this astonishing retreat, had in a manner been strangers to food, rest, or sleep. — Here

May Anno 1742.

* Since better known by the name of *Mhir Jaffier Ali Khan* Soubah of *Bengal*.

they were again surrounded on all sides, except on that of the river, which *Aliverdi* was informed was in one place fordable, a circumstance unsuspected by the enemy.

It was now universally believed that the usurper must surrender himself, or be cut to pieces with the few that remained with him, and indeed a report ran through the province that he was actually taken prisoner; but the actions of this handful of men in their retreat from *Burdwan*, had struck such terror and amazement into the whole *Mahrattor* army, that they gazed upon them as so many enraged tygers in a net, without daring to approach the toils that enclosed them; contenting themselves with the dependance of having them to a surrender: Little dreaming that *Aliverdi* would attempt fording the river, with people near exhausted by continued labour and watching.

The usurper taking advantage of this visible panic in the enemy, and unwilling to let the triumphant ardour of his own soldiers cool, resolved to attempt the river without further delay, and knowing there was a defile leading from the village to the river, through which the enemy might intercept

tercept his passage, he judged it necessary to secure the *Defile*, thereby also to prevent his rear being attacked before they could gain the river.

The defence of this dangerous post was given to *Mustapha Khan*, supported by *Seyud Amet Khan*, and *Jaffier Khan*, with eighty *select Patans*, who immediately departed to take possession of the *Defile*—As soon as they were posted, *Mustapha Khan* dispatched a messenger to the Soubah to advise him he might attempt the river whenever he pleased.

Aliverdi having previously made the necessary dispositions, put himself at the head of the *Patans*, and gave the signal for marching to the river, which they entered without molestation preceded by well instructed guides.

As soon as the enemy perceived him in motion, they instantly attacked the *Defile* with great violence, hoping yet to circumvent him.—They at first seemed to deride and despise the small number left for the defence of it, but soon found their error in repeated repulses with heavy slaughter, from this determined, though small body of men;

each of their leaders on this momentous occasion giving proofs of valour worthy the greatest heroes of antiquity.

They maintained their post for a full hour against reiterated attacks of fresh troops, without giving the least way, and until they judged the Soubah had safely past the river; they then began to retreat by slow degrees through the *Defile*, without turning their backs, and having gained about the middle part of it *, advice was brought to *Mustapha Khan*, that his rear was attacked by the enemy †.—This general without hesitating a moment committed the charge of his front to *Jeyndee Amet Khan*, and *Jaffier Khan*, and ordering the forty men that composed his rear to face about, he put himself at their head, forming two fronts to oppose the enemy, and sending orders to *Jeyndee Amet* to continue his retreat, he bravely charged his new antagonists, and forced them to retire with much loss; when the whole party

* The *Defile* was about eighty yards in length and ten wide.

† This event happened thus—a body of the *Mahrattas*, about one thousand men, forced an entrance into the town, and had made a fruitless attack upon *Aliverdi*'s rear, as they passed the river, from which they were now returned.

had

had cleared the *Deyle*, he commanded his men to form in one line on the shore, with their backs to the river, and making a feint to give a general assault, the enemy as he expected was struck with terror, and retired many paces, *Mustapha* taking advantage of their distance, instantly commanded his troops to face about and take the river, into which they plunged and gained the opposite shore, with the loss on the whole of, only fifteen men.

If we consider the retreat of these Veterans (from *Burdwan* to the opposite shore of *Cutwah* river) in all its circumstances, it will appear as amazing an effort of human bravery, as the history of any age or people have chronicled, and we think it merits as much being recorded and transmitted to posterity, as *that* of the celebrated *Athenian* general and historian.

Mustapha Khan, *Jeyndee Amet Khan*, and *Jaffier Khan* were received by the Soubah, with all the marks of the highest affection and esteem; he bestowed great encomiums on the valour of *Jaffier Khan*, who was ever after distinguished by his favor; he saluted and thanked by name, every one of the *Patans*, who fought under

these commanders at the memorable defence of the *Deffé*, and having refreshed his troops, proceeded on his march to the capital, where he was received with astonishment and reverence. His first acts were to present *Mufapha Khan* with ten lac of rupees, and proportionably to reward the rest of his brave defenders.

Whilst the usurper was gaining everlasting renown as a soldier, his brother *Hodjee Hamet* was employed in putting the city of *Morshadabad* in a posture of defence, with extraordinary expedition he sunk a ditch round it, formed a rampart and parapet, and planted cannon in those parts where the city was most open to the enemies attacks.—*Aliverdi* reproaching him, "with having abandoned him to the ene-"my, and with being solicitous only for "his own safety, by neglecting to send a "body of troops to favor his retreat." *Hodjee* replied, "that concluding (from the "number of the enemy, his forlorn situa-"tion, and the repeated reports of his "being taken prisoner and killed) he was "no more, he thought it more advise-"able to strengthen the city, than to wea-"ken the defence of it, by parting with "any of the few forces he had been able

"to

[illegible] for its preservation. [illegible]
[illegible] found him in a much better state of resistance than he expected.

Before the usurper had set out on his expedition for the reduction of *Orixa*, he had sent orders to his deputy governor of *Patna* to levy troops in the province of *Babar*; but these forces being not yet arrived in *Bengal*, he was to the great mortification of his enterprising and military genius, reduced to the necessity of shutting himself up in his capital, and was employed in providing further for its security.

The *Mahrattors* recovering from their consternation and panic, and acquiring a better knowledge of the river, passed it with their whole force, advanced to *Morshedabad*, and surrounded it without attempting to assault it; they detached parties into the environs, plundering and destroying wherever they came; they sent some bodies of horse into the island of *Cassimbuzar*, committing there the most horrid devastation and cruelties; they fed their horses and cattle with mulberry plantations, and thereby irreparably injured the silk manufacture: in short, after committing every

hostile

hoſtile act, which plundered of power to annoy without moleſtation, they thought it at length prudent to retire with their plunder, leſt the approaching rainy ſeaſon (which ſets in uſually about the middle of *June*) ſhould intercept their retreat.

June Anno 1742. With this neceſſary precaution they quitted the blockade of the city, and repaſſed at *Cuttack* early in *June*, 1742, with all their immenſe plunder.

From *Cuttack* they penetrated through the *Burdwaan* country, detaching their parties into every diſtrict, ſtill amaſſing greater booty, and ſtriking univerſal terror round them, ſometimes alarming even the *European* ſettlements: The rains at length ſetting in, the middle of *June*, gave a flattering hope that the land would ſoon be delivered from theſe devouring locuſts; but alas! this pleaſing proſpect had but a ſhort duration; they retired it is true, and bent their rout towards the *Bierbobeen* hills, irreſolute whether they ſhould quit the provinces intirely, or only lodge themſelves in convenient quarters in that high country, where they would be ready to commence a new ſcene of deſtruction as ſoon as the rains ſhould broke

broke up (which they generally do about the latter end of September or the middle of October.)

It was by moſt believed that the enemy had taken their departure for their own country, and it is certain they had formed that reſolution: when on a ſudden, to the utter amazement of all, *Beſchar Pundit* iſſued orders to march into *Bengal*; ſo his ill deſtiny prompted, that he might by his fall pay a ſacrifice for the cruel enormities committed on all ranks, by thoſe under his command. July June 1742.

They returned about the latter end of *July*, and pitched their tents on the higheſt parts of the *Burdomaan* country, and ſettled themſelves there for the remainder of the rainy ſeaſon.

On this event a general face of ruin ſucceeded. Many of the inhabitants, weavers, and huſbandmen fled, the *Aurungs* were in a great degree deſerted, the lands unlilled, and the wretched fugitives who had eſcaped with nothing but their wives and children, and whatever they could carry in their hands, thought there was no ſafety for them, until they arrived on the *Eaſtern* ſhore

ſhore of the *Ganges*; to which they flocked in throngs, without intermiſſion for many days together.

The manufactures of the *Aurungs* received ſo injurious a blow at this period, that they have ever ſince loſt their original purity and eſtimation, and probably will never recover them again; but it is neceſſary we explain what influenced *Boſcbar Pundit*, to take the extraordinary and unexpected ſtep above-mentioned.

There was an officer employed in the receipts of the revenues at *Dacca*, named *Mbir Habbeeb* who had embezzled a conſiderable ſum, and had otherways been guilty of mal-adminiſtration in the execution of his truſt; this man had been ordered ſoon after *Aliverdi*'s ſeizing the government, to repair to the capital, and render an account of the branch committed to him;——he was bold and enterpriſing, of ſolid judgment, minutely acquainted with the ſtate of the provinces and courſe and nature of the revenues; to draw his character, in ſhort we need only ſay, he was in *political virtue* the very counterpart of *Hodjee Hamet*.

Con-

Conscious that his conduct at *Dacca* would not bear the test of examination, he availed himself of the present juncture of confusion, and in place of repairing to the capital, he fled to *Boschar Pundit*, and arrived in his camp, at the very period, that general resolved to quit the provinces and return to *Sittarah*.

His known character and abilities procured him a ready and welcome reception, and his mischievous talents made him a dangerous instrument in the hands of these invaders, to accomplish in a manner the utter destruction of the country; he represented to *Boschar Pundit*, "That in the "present state of the provinces, he might "with facility and security assume the go-"vernment of the Soubahdnary himself; "that it would be inglorious for him *to treat with the calf, when he could take the* "*cow also*, that the rains would soon break "up, and set his calvalry at liberty, and that "he had no cause to apprehend the usurper "would ever have any power or force capable "of opposing him." *Boschar Pundit* greedily hearkened to this pernicious advice, immediately changed his rout, and returned from *Bierbobeen* to *Burdomaan*, as before remarked, and having fixed his head quarters at *Burdwan*,

to

[illegible] proper officers at the head of small parties to collect the revenues at every [illegible] of customs, and this they did for some time with as much tranquillity, as if they had been the natural sovereigns of the country.

During these transactions the usurper was not idle, as soon as he had certain intelligence that the enemy had repassed the *Cutwah* river, he quitted the city, and being soon after re-inforced by the *Patna* levies, and the number of his *Patans* increased from the Northward, he formed his camp in the neighbourhood of *Murshedabad*,—the *English*, *French* and *Dutch*, thought it necessary during the rains, by various means to fortify also, and add to the strength of their several settlements, at *Fort William*, *Chundernagore*, *Hougly* and *Cossimbuzar*, though hitherto unmolested in their persons or property by the enemy.

Early in *October* the enemy, by the advice of *Mhir Hubbeeb*, threw a strong bridge of boats over the *Cutwah* river, the defence of which was given to him; by his assistance also the enemy was now supplied with some small cannon, fire arms and ammunition; he constructed for the defence

of

of his bridge two large boats, the bak ends tigging above, the bakes below the bridge on the *Plaſſey* ſide; on theſe he threw plank forms on which he planted a few carriage pieces, forming eaſtful batteries with loop holes, for the ſecurity of his own people, as well as for the annoyance of the uſurpers troops, in caſe they ſhould prove hardy enough to attack the bridge, for the defence of which he embarked with him the beſt markſmen he could ſelect.

This diſpoſition being compleated, the whole of the *Mabarattor* army croſſed over, and began their inurſions to different parts of the iſland, where ever the waters would admit their marching; ſometimes ſhowing themſelves in ſtrong bodies round the uſurper's camp, inſulting him with opprobrious language and inſults, tho' not daring to attack him.

The latter end of *October* the rains broke up, the waters decreaſed hourly, and the roads ſoon became paſſable every where; it was now the enemy thought it adviſeable to recall their detached parties, and unite their whole force, which they drew up between the uſurper's camp and *Plaſſey* grove, ſecure of a retreat to their bridge, there

they halted three days, and reported they would wait there and give the usurper battle.

Aliverdi, elated at this report, took the field, and advanced towards the enemy, not doubting but that if he could once bring them to a general engagement, it would prove decisive in his favor.—His whole force amounted to about forty-eight thousand men, of whom barely twenty thousand were horse, whereas the enemy's was wholly composed of cavalry, an advantage they had the wisdom fully to avail themselves of, by the sagacious counsel of *Mhir Hubbeeb*, through the course of this destructive and long contest.

As the usurper advanced, they retreated towards the bridge, which they now resolved to repass; this they could not effect without their rear being warmly attacked and harrassed by *Aliverdi*, who for this purpose advanced with a chosen body of horse, some hours before the main body of his army.

The enemy had gained the bridge, and passed over three fourths of their army, when *Aliverdi* made a furious assault upon the remainder,

remainder, and threw them into confuſion; but notwithſtanding a heavy ſlaughter made amongſt them, the greateſt part of them recovered the bridge, and *Aliverdi* was obliged to draw off his people (who began to be ſeverely galled by the fire from *Mbir Hubbeeb*'s floating machine, and retired out of the reach of the ſhot, where he ſtayed until his heavy cannon was brought up to him.

Had *Mbir Hubbeeb*, in obedience to *Beſchar Pundit*'s orders, drawn off his party, and deſtroyed the bridge, as ſoon as the rear of the *Mabarattor* army paſt it, and *Aliverdi* retired, he would have gained great reputation in the action; but not ſuſpecting the uſurper's cannon could poſſibly be ſo near, as they really were, he was ſo raſh as to remain on his poſt, until *Aliverdi* had with aſtoniſhing expedition opened a battery of three ſix pounders upon it.—*Mbir Hubbeeb*, ſtood one diſcharge from the battery, and now perceiving his error, attempted to eſcape with his party; but *Aliverdi* had poſted a body of horſe ſo advantageouſly, that immediately upon the diſcharge from his battery, they fell in pell mell with the enemy on the bridge, and a furious engagement enſued, in which *Mbir*

Hubbeeb's party, three excepted, were cut to pieces. Himſelf and thoſe three gained the *Cutwah* ſhore, and by the advantage of a fleet horſe that waited for him, he eſcaped to the *Mahrattor* army. A melancholy event cloſed the action; *Aliverdi*'s troops crouding in too great numbers upon the bridge, it failed under them, and a thouſand brave fellows periſhed in the river.

The uſurper repaired the bridge with all poſſible diligence, and croſſed over his troops and artillery in purſuit of the enemy, who artfully eluded every attempt he made to bring them to a general action; thus by continual marches and counter-marches, his troops, particularly his foot, were almoſt exhauſted by fatigue; whilſt the *Mahrattors* in detached parties ranged the provinces at large, collecting the revenues without the leaſt interruption, the uſurper not daring to divide his army further than reinforcing the garriſon of *Bukcbs Bunder* on the *Ganges* with 500 horſe and 1000 gun men, under the command of *Seraſdi Mahomet*.

Aliverdi, touched with deep chagrin at ſeeing his ſo lately uſurped dominions a prey to his enemies, without being able to protect

protect them, or bring the *Mabarattors* to any decisive action, at last resolved to treat with *Boschar Pundit*; but that General was so elated with success, that he now added, at the instigation of *Mhir Hubbeeb* a new article to those already offered at *Burdwan*, *viz.* "that the usurper should also restore "the Soubahship to *Soujah Khan*'s family, "and resign the government he had so "wickedly usurped to *Suffraaz Khan*'s el- "dest son." *Mhir Hubbeeb*, who knew any treaty of peace would be fatal to himself, artfully threw this stumbling block in the way, which he foresaw would render the treaty of none effect; and to carry this point, he insinuated to *Boschar Pundit*, "that unless this article was insisted on, "the most essential and positive part of the "Emperor's orders would appear totally "neglected, and willed him with great "humility to reflect how he would answer "this neglect to his master, the King of "*Sittarah*."

This additional article produced the effect that *Mhir Hubbeeb* expected; for it was refused by the brothers with marks of resentment and disdain, and hostilities were immediately commenced again on both sides. —Several skirmishes happened between

them, in which the uſurper's horſe always gained ſome advantage; but theſe produced nothing deciſive.

Hodjee Hamet, who never ſuffered any ſcruples of conſcience to oppoſe the foulest means to accompliſh his views; in a private letter ſent to his brother, urged the neceſſity in their preſent ſituation, of attempting that by treachery, which they had failed in obtaining by every other means. *Aliverdi*, who ſaw the hazardous and neceſſitous poſture of their affairs, as well as his brother, did not long oppoſe the motion. *Hodjee* formed the plan, and it was executed in manner following.

A treaty was ſet on foot by *Aliverdi*, who, under pretence of making it more concluſive and leſs liable to interruptions, propoſed a conference with *Boſcbar Pundit*, the overture was accepted by that General, contrary to the opinion of *Mhir Hubbeeb* and the reſt of his principal officers.

It was agreed that a ſpacious tent ſhould be prepared and erected by the uſurper, midway between the two armies, where the chiefs were to meet on a certain day and hour, attended each with eighty followers

lowers only, and that in the mean time hoſtilities on both ſides ſhould ceaſe.

The appointed time being come, and all things prepared for the reception of the chiefs, they advanced with the ſtipulated number of followers, conſiſting on both ſides of principal officers. When they approached near the tent, *Aliverdi* entered firſt, and was followed by *Beſchar Pandit* without the leaſt ſuſpicion of treachery.

The uſual ſalutes and ceremonials being over, and both parties ſeated, on a ſignal given, two hundred ſelect men who had been concealed by *Aliverdi* between a double lining of the tent, ſuddenly ruſhed out, and cut the *Mahrattor* General and his party to pieces, before they were able to draw their ſcymitars, two or three only eſcaping in the confuſion.

At the ſame inſtant a ſignal was diſplayed from the tent (before agreed on) for the ſpeedy advance of the uſurper's army; this being obſerved by the *Mahrattor* army, they alſo began to be in motion, not knowing as yet what had happened; but being not long after joined by thoſe who had eſcaped the ſlaughter, and informed of the fate of

their general and officers, they breathed nothing but fury and revenge.

In the first transports of their rage they advanced, and seemed resolved to avenge the treachery, by given immediate battle to the usurper; but here, the wisdom and address of *Mhir Hubbeeb* interposed; he represented to them, "that the only means to frus-"trate the great object the usurper had in "view by this treacherous assassination, "was, to avoid coming to a general action "with him." His arguments gained force and influence from the distracted state of the army, being now under no head, or any regular command; and observing the usurper advancing towards them in full march, they suddenly retired, to his great mortification and disappointment.

As soon as the disorder in the *Mahartor* army subsided, they elected unanimously *Allee Bey* for their General, an officer that held the next rank to *Boschar Pundit*, and who bore a considerable degree of reputation amongst them; and now their conduct seemed to shew that they had resolved to execute that vengeance on the distressed country and inhabitants, which they could not execute on the usurper himself: To

 this

this end, they planted ſmall parties of obſervation about the ſkirts of his army to report his motions, and appointing *Nagur*, the capital of *Bierbobeen* for their general rendezvous, they divided their army and carried fire and ſword in all their different routs; — they detached a ſtrong body to *Bukchs Bunder*, which they attacked, took, and plundered; perpetrating every where the moſt execrable cruelties that revenge and inhumanity could dictate, cutting off the ears, noſes, and hands, of any of the inhabitants whom they ſuſpected of concealing their wealth, or valueable moveables, ſometimes carrying their barbarity ſo far as cutting off the breaſts of women on the ſame pretence, neither ſex or age proving any ſecurity againſt theſe enraged barbarians.

During theſe horrid ſcenes of deſolation, the uſurper left no ſtratagems uneſſayed to bring the enemy to a battle, but all his endeavours proved ineffectual: He was in continual chaſe of them from the beginning of *December* 1742, to the end of *February* 1742-3, and at length, with aſtoniſhing bravery and perſeverance obliged them to repair to their general rendezvous, and to retire out of the provinces over the *Bierbo-*

been hills, from whence they ſoon took their departure for *Sittarah*, to render an account of their expedition—leaving many of their brethren behind them in the hands of *Aliverdi*, who had been taken priſoners in different actions; amongſt the priſoners, was an officer of diſtinction, character, and authority, named *Seſſarow*, of whom we ſhall again have occaſion to make mention.

The uſurper had hardly time to breath and form ſome hopes of receſs and eaſe to himſelf, and tranquillity to his harraſſed and deſolate country; when he was again alarmed by advices from *Oriſſa*, that another army of *Mabarattors* had entered the provinces by the way of *Cuttack*, commanded by *Ragojee*; and to compleat his diſtreſs, and put his fortitude to the utmoſt proof, he ſhortly after received intelligence by expreſs from *Hodjee*, that a third army of *Mabarattors* had entered by the ſide of *Patna* commanded by *Ballerow*, and had already penetrated within a day or two's march of *Siclygully*. Theſe Generals led each an army of 60,000 horſe; the firſt had been diſpatched from *Sittarah*, to enforce the orders before given to *Boſchar Pundit*, and to ſupport him in the execution of them; the latter, ſet out later from

March Anno 1742-3.

the ſame city with inſtructions to join *Rageſee*, and avenge the murder of *Baſcher Pundit*, of which advice had been received at *Sittarah*, by expreſſes ſent from *Bierbeeen* immediately after that event.

The uſurper thus beſet, and apprehenſive of being hemmed in by the two armies, and again cut off from his capital; directed his march with the utmoſt celerity to *Cutwah* bridge, which he gained, paſſed over his whole army, deſtroyed the bridge, and proceeded to his capital, with a mind greatly agitated and oppreſſed by the reflection of being again forced to abandon his country to mercileſs enemies, whom he was not able to oppoſe with troops enfeebled by continual labour and hardſhips.

The reader may remember of how great importance *the paſs of Sicligully* might have been to the unfortunate *Suffraaz Khan*, had it been properly put in a ſtate of defence: The uſurper well knew it's conſequence, and therefore ſoon after his poſſeſſing himſelf of the Soubahſhip, he ſtationed there a truſty officer with proved troops, and three pieces of cannon—depending that a vigorous ſtand would there be made againſt the invaders on the ſide of *Patna*, and their en-

entrance into *Bengal* at leaſt retarded, if the *paſs* was as well defended as it was capable of; not ſuſpecting that there was a poſſibility of their obtaining an inlet by any other paſſage, unleſs they marched far to the Weſtward by the *Pachet* road, and entered by *Bierbobeen*, as *Boſchar Pundit* had done the preceeding year, flattering himſelf that by ſo long a march they would not be able to reach the province before the annual rains ſet in; but herein his foreſight failed him.

Ballajee Row, more commonly (though improperly) known by the name of *Ballerow*, on his arrival in the neighbourhood of *Boglypore*, received intelligence from thoſe who had joined him, and were declared enemies of the uſurper's houſe, that by his attempting to force the paſs of *Sicly-gully* he would hazard the loſs of a multitude of his men, and probably in the end be obliged to relinquiſh the deſign with diſgrace to his arms.—The *Pachet road* was propoſed, but he declined hearkening to it, urging "that thereby he ſhould loſe his "harveſt of plunder for that year, all "which would be appropriated by his "friend *Ragojee* to *fatten* himſelf and fol-"lowers; whilſt *he* and *his* people would

"be

" be left to *ſtarve* on the *Padjee* (paltry)
" contributions, he had been able to raiſe
" in *Babar*."

Whilſt he was under this difficulty, the evil genius of the uſurper (and of unhappy *Bengal*) dictated a meaſure, that extricated him without danger to himſelf or followers. He ſent for ſome of the petty Rajahs from the neighbouring *Colgong* hills, and queſtioning them concerning a paſſage through the hills to *Bengal*, he offered them a large reward if any of them would ſupply him with guides to anſwer that purpoſe. The Rajahs to a man, were well enough diſpoſed to comply with his wiſhes; for the uſurper's treacherous conduct during the firſt ſix years of his government of *Babar*, had rendered his name as hateful as dreadful to them all; yet none of them had knowledge enough of the three ranges of mountains that ſeparated *Babar* from *Bengal*, to engage in ſo hazardous an undertaking.

The enquiry and reward being however bruited abroad, it came to the ears of an old peaſant an inhabitant of *Colgong* hills; this man came to the *Mahrattor* camp, and deſired to be introduced to the preſence

of

of the General, which having obtained, he boldly undertook, on the forfeiture of his head, to guide his army through ſecret paſſes into *Bengal*, for a reward of one Lac of Rupees paid down to his family.

The General taking two of the Rajahs aſide to whom the peaſant was known, and inquiring of them touching the character of the man, and what degree of credit might be given to his veracity and knowledge, received ſuch encouragement that he no longer doubted, and accordingly paid down the money, and iſſued his orders for marching the next day.

The guide with faithfulneſs and dexterity led the whole *Mahararttor* army, at firſt Weſtward, a point or two Southerly, until he found a *paſs*, which he ſought for about the center of the range of the *Colgong* hills: This paſs found, was his mark for the remainder of the expedition; he carried them through this paſs by very practicable roads with much facility, until the mouth of it opened upon the level country between the *Colgong* and *Telliagurry* hills, from hence his courſe was due South, which led to the ſecond paſs through the laſt-mentioned hills; this paſs he accompliſhed with equal eaſe,

eaſe, from hence for two days he croſſed the level country, that lies between the *Telliagurry* and *Rajambol* mountains, ſhaping his courſe about South East; at night he told the General he muſt halt until the morning ſun appeared.—In the morning he led them due South, and in the evening of the ſame day entered a paſs which guided them through the *Rajambol* mountains, and landed (if we may be allowed the expreſſion) the whole army, without the loſs either of man or horſe in *Bengal*, on the plains Weſt of the city of *Rajambol* at a little town called *Banian Gang*. Having performed his obligation in ſix days from leaving *Bogulpore* (more commonly by the Engliſh called *Boglypore*) through ways until this period deemed totally impaſſible, he was farther rewarded with handſome preſents by *Ballajee Row*, and departed to his home: his name was *Sittaram Roy*, a *Gentoo* of the *Raazpoot* tribe.—*Ballajee Row* reached *Banian Gang* the 13th of *March*, *Anno* 1742-3.

The uſurper, who had received expreſs intelligence of *Ballajee Row*'s departure from *Bogulpore*, and of the march of his army Weſtward; did not entertain the leaſt doubt but he was gone round the mountains

tains to enter *Bengal* by the *Pachet* or *Bierbeheen*, and was ſo much convinced of it, that he began to prepare again for taking the field, projecting that he might be able to bring the other army under *Rogojee* to an engagement, and defeat him before he could poſſibly be joined by *Ballajee Row*; but he had hardly formed this reſolution, when he was adviſed by a courier from his Governor of *Rajahmhol*, "That *Ballajee Row* had entered *Bengal* by paſſes through the mountains, and was by that time, he believed joined with *Ragojee*."

This intelligence ſhocked the uſurper's preſent hopes, but not his courage and conſtancy; he laid aſide the project of repaſſing the *Cutwah* river—but determined, not to coop himſelf up again in his capital, for the defence of which having made every neceſſary proviſion, he formed a ſtrong camp not far from the city, preſerving a ready communication with it.

The two *Maharattor* Generals met in the *Burdomaan* country, the 17th *March*, 1742-3, and after a private conference the following agreement was publiſhed, "that "an equal partition of the revenues and "plunder ſhould be made between the two

"armies

"armies, who nevertheleſs were to act "diſtinctly under their reſpective Generals "and officers." They then ſettled the different routs of their detached ſmall parties, and took intire poſſeſſion of the country. Then uniting the main bodies of their armies, they marched to *Cutwah*, conſtructed a new bridge, and paſſed over with their whole force. Here they again ſeparated, and renewed the depradations every where that *Boſcbar Pundit* had began the preceding year.

During theſe tranſactions the uſurper kept himſelf within his intrenchments, yet he was not idle; convinced he could not oppoſe them by force, he had nothing left but to combat them with fraud and ſtratagem, weapons that he was as great a maſter of as of arms. His firſt movement, was to acquire a minute knowledge of the temper, genius, capacity, and characters of the two leaders of the enemy, and how they affected each other; in all theſe particulars he obtained perfect ſatisfaction, by the means of his priſoner *Seſſarow* before mentioned, whom he had diſtinguiſhed by every mark of favor and reſpect from the time he firſt fell into his hands, foreſeeing he might be of future uſe to him; from the arrival

of

of the two armies he had redoubled his efforts, and of an enemy, had made him a firſt friend.

Divide and conquer, was one of the uſurper's favorite maxims in politics, as well as war; by the lights he had received from *Seſſarau*, he rightly judged the minds of the enemies Generals were fitly diſpoſed to take the impreſſion he intended to ſtamp on them—he learnt that *Ballajee Row*, was hot, inſolent, and withal avaritious to an extreme degree; that *Ragojee* was the braveſt ſoldier, but irritated and jealous at *Ballajee Row*'s being ſent equal in command with him, as he bore a ſuperior rank to the other; and more to favor the uſurper's artful views, he was informed that already there ſubſiſted ſome miſunderſtandings between them and their reſpective troops, touching ſuſpicions of an unjuſt diviſion of their plunder on both ſides.

With theſe materials he began to work; laboring to enlarge a breach that was not yet wide enough for an attack; his plan was, by every means to promote the growth of thoſe ſeeds of diviſion and jealouſy which had already taken root amongſt them; to this end, he directed ſome capable emiſ-

ſaries

ſaries (fully inſtructed) to deſert to both armies, theſe executed his purpoſes ſo well that they produced the effect he wiſhed; they prepoſſeſſed the enemy againſt themſelves, and they accuſed each other of illicit practices in the diviſion both of the revenues and plunder, and the ſpies were ſo well armed, that they produced proofs and vouchers of many inſtances (on both ſides) that would not admit of contradicton. This occaſioned mutual heats and animoſities between the two armies, and an open rupture ſoon followed, each reſolving to act in future on a ſeparate and independant footing; the uſurper ſeized this favorable occaſion, and knowing *Seſſarow* had an influence over *Ballajee Row*, (to whom he was related) he employed him to negotiate in the moſt ſecret manner, a ſeparate treaty of peace with that General.

Seſſarow exerted his power with ſuch ſucceſs, that he ſoon diſpoſed his relation to receive favorable impreſſions of the uſurper, and readily to hearken to a peace with him; to this he was the more eaſily induced, as thereby he indulged his ruling paſſion, by hopes of making his own market of the Uſurper, without the participation of his rival *Ragojee*.

The preliminaries of this treaty were ſoon adjuſted, "the uſurper was to cede "to *Ballajee Row* alone, the *Chout* of two "years revenues; and *Ballajee Row* engaged "on his part, to join the Uſurper with his "force, and aſſiſt him in driving *Ragojee* "and his army out of the provinces." It was further agreed, that to keep up the appearance of enmity and deceive *Ragojee*; *Ballajee Row*'s army ſhould advance nearer to the Uſurper's camp,—and make a ſhew of attacking it; this movement was not only made to amuſe *Ragojee*, but alſo to facilitate a perſonal conference between the Uſurper and the General, which was to take place on the thirtieth of *March* 1743, near *Plaſſey*.

On the twenty-ninth, the uſurper quitted his camp, and directed his march towards *Plaſſey*; he was not far advanced, before his ſpies brought him intelligence, that *Ragojee*'s army was in motion, as well as *Ballajee Row*'s, this raiſed a ſuſpicion in *Aliverdi*, that the treaty was only aſſented to, to amuſe him, and draw him out of this camp; therefore he immediately retired to it again, and the treaty was retarded until the motions of the two armies were explained to him.

Seſſarow

Seſſarow, deeply chagrined at ſuſpicions which reflected on his own *ſincerity*, engaged on the forfeiture of his head for *that* of his couſin, which being ſupported by a ſolemn oath (by the *Ganges*) on the part of *Ballajee Row*, *Aliverdi*'s doubts ſubſided, the treaty was reſumed, and the conference appointed on the third of *April*, but the place of meeting was changed to *Midway*, between *Plaſſy* and *Burwah*, a few miles nearer his camp and capital *.

The ſecond of *April*, the uſurper again quitted his camp, and began his march, having draughted off a ſelect body of 10,000 horſe, commanded by *Muſtapha Khan*, that moved on his flank, to be an occaſional check on *Ragojee*.

The third, the chiefs met at the appointed place, in a tent (previouſly examined by deputies from both parties) about two corſe diſtant from each of their armies.—The condition openly inſiſted upon by the *Maharattor* was, " that twenty-five lac of

* The cauſe that gave riſe to *Aliverdi*'s ſuſpicions, was this.——*Ragojee* having heard that *Ballajee Row* intended to attack *Aliverdi*'s camp, and judging the city would fall a prey to him if he ſucceeded, put his army in motion, that he might be near at hand, to come in for a ſhare of the plunder.

" rupees, for two years Chout of the reve-
" nues, ſhould be paid down in gold,"—to this the Uſurper replied, " that how-
" ever unreaſonable the demand, con-
" ſidering they themſelves had collected
" *the whole* of the revenues and cuſtoms
" for the laſt two years, yet, he would
" not make any objection, provided that
" *Ragojee* could be brought to ſign the
" treaty, otherwiſe that he could not ſubmit
" to it:" This unexpected propoſal was highly diſguſtful to *Ballajee Row*, and had well nigh broke off the treaty; but by the interpoſition of *Seſſarow*, he was at laſt prevailed on to ſend the overture to *Ragojee*, but not until he had been made eaſy by the promiſe of a private ſtipulation for himſelf.

Ragojee immediately returned for anſwer, " that he would hearken to no terms of
" accommodation, unleſs the payment of
" the Chout in perpetuity, was eſtabliſhed
" to them, as a preliminary article for
" treating at all *."

When the meſſenger returned with this laconic reply, the treaty ſeemed for ſome

* This preliminary was dictated to him by *Mhir Hubbeeb*, who joined *Ragojee* as ſoon as he entered the province of *Bengall*.

time

time unhinged. — However by the addreſs and mediation of *Seſſarow*, a ſeparate peace was at laſt concluded with *Ballajee Row*, on the following terms. "That the Uſurper "ſhall pay down two years Chout, eſti- "mated at twenty-two lac of rupees in "gold, and that *Ballajee Row* ſhould either "ſatisfy *Ragojee*, or join the Uſurper to "drive *him* out of the country." To the performance of which they both ſolemnly engaged themſelves by the moſt obligatory oaths; this done and mutual compliments and preſents made, they parted.

The Uſurper with great punctuality performed his part of the treaty in two days, and *Ballajee Row*, ſo far regarded it, that he drew off his army, repaſſed *Cutwab* river, and retired to *Burdomaan*, followed by *Ragojee*, who thought himſelf no match for the Uſurper on equal terms.

Ballajee row, recalled all his detached parties, and making a dividend amongſt his troops of part of the Uſurper's contribution, according to their different ranks, he quitted *Bengall*, and marched by way of *Bierbokeen* to *Sittarah*; leaving (in breach of his ſolemn oath) *Ragojee* to make the beſt terms he could for himſelf.

This General made the moſt of his time, and immediately took poſſeſſion of thoſe parts of the country, which had been lately evacuated by *Ballajee Row*'s flying parties; he ſent *Mhîr Hubbeeb*, with the title and authority of General, to take poſſeſſion of *Oriſſa*, who accordingly ſeated himſelf at *Cuttack*, where he ruled as ſovereign of the province.

The Uſurper, called upon by the univerſal clamour of the people, and diſtreſſes of his country, once more quitted his capital, croſſed over *Cutwah* river, and marched in purſuit of *Ragojee*; in which chaſe he was employed all the remaining part of *April*, and until the middle of *May*, without being able by any art or ſtratagem, to bring him to a general action, and the rains ſetting in earlier than uſual this year, and the roads becoming impaſſable, both armies were obliged to go into quarters, about the twentieth of *May*; at the cloſe of this campaign the enemy remained in quiet poſſeſſion of *Oriſſa*, and of all the country on the Weſtern ſhore of the *Hougley* river, from *Ballaſore* to within a few miles of *Tanna*'s *Fort*, near the *Engliſh* ſettlement of *Fort William* *.

* *Aliverdî* retired with his army to *Morſhadabad* and *Ragojee*, with his main body to *Bierboon* during the rains.

Though

Though the treaty of peace with *Ballajee Row* anſwered a preſent purpoſe, and relieved the Uſurper from the more immediate danger which threatened himſelf, his capital and family, yet it afforded no relief to the provinces; the partial execution of the treaty on the part of the *Maharattar*, he could not be much ſurpriſed at, as himſelf had ſet them an example of perfidious treachery.

Every evil attending deſtructive war, was felt by this unhappy country in the moſt eminent degree; a ſcarcity of grain in all parts, the wages of labor greatly enhanced, trade, foreign and inland, laboring under every diſadvantange and oppreſſion; —and though during the receſſes of the enemy from *June* to *October*, the manufactors of this opulent kingdom raiſed their drooping heads, yet the duration of their reprieves from danger was ſo ſhort, that every ſpecies of cloth at the *Arungs* were haſtily, and conſequently badly fabricated, though immenſely raiſed in their prices, and from theſe cauſe, came into diſrepute at all the foreign markets, particularly at the Weſtern ports of *Juddah*, *Mocha*, and *Buſſorah*.

The trade of the *Europeans* became greatly embarraſſed and injured, and their effects often plundered by the enemy, and theſe grievances much heightened by oppreſſive exactions of the Uſurper; but in this they were not ſingular, for the whole of the people who yet remained within the reach of his graſp, ſuffered equally in this reſpect, even *Juggdat Seet*'s houſe, who ſo eminently promoted his uſurpation, was often fleeced; to the malicious joy of all, who were friends to *Soujah Khan*'s family.

For theſe oppreſſive meaſures the Uſurper had nothing to plead in extenuation, but *the neceſſities of his ſituation*; and in truth, had he not been the ungrateful traytor he was, they were ſuch, as would have merited the deepeſt commiſeration; for though by his uſurpation he became poſſeſſed of the treaſures of the three laſt Soubahs, yet ſo immenſe were his continual expences and diſburſements, that little of them remained; for notwithſtanding what has been ſaid of the treaty with *Ballajee Row*, it was pretty well known, he did not buy the abſence and retreat of that General, for a ſum leſs than five *korore* of rupees, though the twenty-two lac for two years Chout only were ſpeciouſly publiſhed to the world, to

ſave

ſave the credit of the Uſurper, and to afford an opportunity to the *Mahartattor* of ſecreting from his followers all above that ſum, which he appropriated to his own uſe, beſides the lions ſhare of the twenty-two lac, therefore he was well enabled at his departure to preſent to *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, *Hodjee*'s ſecond ſon, a ſingle compleat dreſs (for *Seerpah*) valued at two lac of rupees.

October 1743, opened the next campaign, when the Uſurper again took the field, and *Ragojee* deſcending from the heights of *Bierbobeen*, aſſembled his forces about *Burdwan*.—The ſucceeding months exhibited the ſame ſcenes of marches, countermarches, retreats and ſkirmiſhes, with various ſucceſs; but with uniform miſery to the people, who now for the firſt time, began to be plundered, and cruelly treated, as well by the detached parties of the Uſurper as of the enemy, thoſe aſſuming the dreſs and accoutrements of the *Mahartattors*, to cover and conceal their villanies. *Anno* 1743.

In *March* 1744, theſe invaders entered the provinces in freſh ſhoals, by *Cuttack*, *Bierbobeen* and *Patna*, excited by the immenſe booty carried off by their brethren, the two preceding years—and thus this miſerable *Anno* 1743-4.

ſerable country fell annually a prey to the depradations of the *Mabarattors*, under various leaders for the ſix ſucceeding years, receiving no effectual check, but from the ſucceſſion of the uſual rainy ſeaſons; during theſe intermediate ſpaces the country was left to fatten, that it might again be worth devouring. During all this ſpace, the Uſurper ſuſtained himſelf with amazing conſtancy, intrepidity and addreſs, though often reduced to the deepeſt diſtreſſes; parts of his capital being frequently attacked and plundered.

In the latter part of the year 1744, by indefatigable marches he attacked and beat up all the quarters of the enemy, and obliged them to retire much ſooner than uſual. *Oriſſa* only remaining in their poſſeſſion, early in *December* 1744, he marched to that province, where with expedition hardly to be conceived, he retook *Cuttack*, and recovered the province, obliging the enemy to retreat to the hills, then leaving forces for the defence of it, he returned, and arrived at the capital, the beginning of *February* 1744-5, crowned with laurels, and received with wonder. Here revolving in his mind the confuſion of affairs in the province of *Bahar* and city of *Patna*, and

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its importance to him, as being one of the enemies keys into his country, and reſolving to have a Governor there, whoſe courage, capacity and integrity he might repoſe a perfect confidence in, he fixed upon his nephew *Jeyndee Amet Khan* for this poſt of truſt, who poſſeſſed theſe qualities in a very high degree; he ſoon after ſet out for his government, eſcorted by a ſtrong body of horſe.

We ſhall ſhun the taſk of entering further minutely into the particular occurrences of theſe annual invaſions, which would only exhibit an irkſome detail of murders, oppreſſions, and diſtreſſes, ſimilar to thoſe already recited; but as we cannot help viewing this Uſurper in an extraordinary light, we ſhould be inexcuſable in neglecting to lay before the public and poſterity thoſe ſtriking events, which were intereſting in themſelves, and which more ſtrongly mark the character and genius of this great, though wicked man, in the courſe of this deſtructive eight years war; with this intent only we again reſume our narrative from the cloſe of the year 1745, a period which gave birth to an *incident*, that eventually proved not only the deſtruction of his hitherto

therto favorite General, but alſo that of his brother and nephew.

It was at the time juſt mentioned above, that the Uſurper firſt began to entertain ſuſpicions and jealouſy of the great reputation and power of *Muſtapha Khan*, who had by his maſter's liberality and other means, at different times acquired great wealth, which he profuſely beſtowed on the ſoldiery, but chiefly on the *Patans*, thereby gaining a dangerous popularity, that bore too much the ſemblance of ambitious views; whether he really had any deſigns againſt his maſter is not known, but being the idol of the army was cauſe ſufficient to make him obnoxious, in a government where no ſubject can with ſafety to himſelf, or to his prince be poſſeſſed with a ſuperior degree of power or renown.

The Uſurper had received intelligence from his brother *Hodjee*, that *Muſtapha Khan* was forming deſigns to his prejudice, and that he had actually concerted meaſures with the *Maharattors*, for cutting him off the enſuing year, and placing himſelf in the government.

Whether this intelligence had truth for it's foundation, or was only afterwards deviſed

viſed to cover the ſtep, that was premeditated againſt *Muſtapha Khan*, is uncertain; *Hadjee*, however, had the addreſs to produce vouchers for his ſuſpicions that bore the ſemblance of facts, and theſe acquiring weight from the brother's apprehenſions of that General's known talents, reputation, and popularity, it was reſolved at all events that he ſhould be aſſaſſinated the next time he appeared at court; and aſſaſſins were accordingly provided, ſtationed for his reception.

But *Muſtapha Khan* being generally beloved, the deſign againſt him could not be ſo ſecretly conducted, as to prevent his receiving hints to provide for his ſafety, and though theſe were imperfect, they were yet ſufficiently alarming to urge his immediate departure from the city, with 3000 *Patan* horſe, and in about twelve hours after, he was followed by *Sumſeer Khan*, a *Patan* General next in command to him, with about 2000 more of their country-men; the whole being joined, by rapid marches, they arrived at *Sicligully*, before any ſuſpicion or intelligence of a breach between them and the Uſurper had reached the commander of that *paſs*, and by a well feigned ſtory of their being diſpatched to join

join and re-inforce *Jeyndee Amet Khan*, they were permitted to advance into *Babar* without interruption; intending to paſs through that province into the *Patan* country.

So great a defection of his beſt troops, with two officers of ſuch reputation at their head, ſtruck the Uſurper with the deepeſt apprehenſions, and this on a double ſcore; he had the greateſt cauſe to dread a union between the *Maharattors* and *Muſtapha Khan*, and by the ſecret flight of that General he became convinced that ſome traytors were about his perſon; but ſtill himſelf, under every exigency and difficulty, he loſt not a moment—by large preſents, and larger promiſes, he ſecured the fidelity of the remaining *Patans*——ſent expreſs upon expreſs to his nephew *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, informing him of this untoward event, with orders "to take the field with what troops "he could get together, and endeavour to "intercept the fugitive *Patans*—and that "himſelf would go in purſuit of them, "and probably they might be hemmed "in between them."

The Uſurper immediately put himſelf at the head of a ſtrong body of forces, who were

were beſt attached to his perſon and government, and with the greateſt expedition arrived at *Siclygully*, where he only ſtayed to ſtrike off the head of that commander, who had ſuffered the *Patans* to paſs his poſt.

Had the unfortunate *Muſtapha Khan* made the ſame expedition from the paſs of *Siclygully*, as he did to it, he would in all human probability have eluded the purſuit, and paſſed through *Babar* before he could poſſibly have been intercepted by *Jeyndî Amet Khan*, or overtaken by the Uſurper; but for a particular reaſon to be hereafter mentioned, and not ſuſpecting he was purſued, he proceeded through *Babar* by ſuch ſlow marches, that the Uſurper came up with him between *Monghîr* and *Patna*, and ſent a meſſenger to him with offers of pardon, and to favor himſelf and followers if they would ſubmit, and embrace again his ſervice.

Muſtapha Khan diſdaining all terms of accommodation, returned the Uſurper's meſſenger, with a brave defiance to him, and receiving intelligence at the ſame time, that *Jeyndî Amet* was within a few hours march of him, he thought it moſt adviſeable to face

face about, and fight the Uſurper firſt, having learnt his troops were very little ſuperiour in number to his own, therefore without heſitation he diſtributed the neceſſary orders, and gave the ſignal for battle.

The conflict was bloody, but of no long duration. Valour and reſentment took full poſſeſſion of the ſoul of *Muſtapha Khan*, and left no place for prudence or precaution: fired with the hope of executing his vengeance on the Uſurper, he thought all elſe unworthy his ſword, and attempting with too much impetuoſity to penetrate to that part where *Aliverdi* fought, and not being well ſupported, he was ſoon ſurrounded, overpowered and ſlain—his head was ſeparated from his body, and elevated upon a ſpear——his death being known to the *Patans*, *Sumſeer Khan*, with thoſe that ſurvived the battle, made a ſpeedy flight, and taking a rout different from that, by which *Jeyndi Amet Khan* was advancing, eſcaped out of the province, notwithſtanding the eager purſuit that was made after them.

The Uſurper returned to his capital more dreaded, but leſs beloved by the people, for this laſt ſtroke of his policy; the jealouſy, and (generally believed) unjuſt motives, for

for aſſaſſinating the *Patna* General were now blazed abroad, and the Uſurper became the object of deteſtation to ſome of his beſt friends, who drew a concluſion (from this act of baſe ingratitude to the man, who had ſo often preſerved his life and government)—very unfavorable, and alarming to themſelves; as the merits of their greateſt ſervices, might on the ſlighteſt ſuſpicions or fear, in the cowardly breaſt of *Hadjee*, only draw on their own deſtruction.

Hadjee, who had accompanied his brother in this expedition againſt *Muſtapha Khan*, advanced with the head of *the General*, to meet his ſon *Jeynal Amet Khan*; with him he returned to *Patna*, and after beſtowing many indignities upon the head of that brave man, whoſe face he could not have beheld the day before, without ſinking into abject fear and terror, had now the coward bravery, to order it to be carried in triumph three times round the city;—unworthy and indecent inſults, from which the remembrance of his former ſignal ſervices ſhould have defended his ſenſeleſs remains.——*Juſtice* ſeemed to intereſt herſelf in avenging the death of this gallant man, by favoring in an extraordinary manner the eſcape of her deſtined inſtrument

Sumſeer Khan; and the brave *Zeynûl Aabut Khan*, at the ſight of the barbarous inſults exerciſed by his father, could not refrain from tears, for great friendſhip ſubſiſted between him and the deceaſed, and his memory was dear to him.

We will leave *Hadjee* on his return to *Morſhadabad*, exulting for a ſhort time over the ſucceſs of his treacherous machinations, and advert to *Sumſeer Khan*.

This *Patan* General arriving ſafe with his few followers in their own country, began immediately to levy troops; and with ſuch ſucceſs, that in the year 1747, he was enabled to advance towards *Patna*, at the head of 8000 choice horſe.

Here it is neceſſary to adverti[illegible] the reader, that the two *Patan* Generals on their ſudden retreat from the city of *Morſhadabad*, had opened a correſpondence with *Mhir Hubbeeb*, informing him "that they ſhould "return the next year, to attempt the "capture and plunder of *Patna*, then "march by the hills and join the *Mahrat-"tor* army, and with their united force "attack the Uſurper; declaring themſelves "juſtly abſolved from all allegiance to

" *the aſſaſſin.*" *Mhir Hubbeeb* improved upon this plan and adviſed " to encounter " *Hadjee* and the Uſurper with their own " weapons, *craft* and *treachery*; for that, " by addreſs and management, and a well " feigned contrition for their former con- " duct, and a freſh tender of their troops, " they might eaſily obtain an interview " with the Nabob of *Patna*, at which " they ſhould cut him off, a circumſtance " that would much facilitate the taking " and plundering that city (which ſeemed " to be their principal object) as ſuch an " event muſt neceſſarily cauſe the greateſt " confuſion and conſternation in the place."

It was this intercourſe of letters, that proved fatal to *Muſtapha Khan*, by retarding his eſcape through *Bahar*, as already mentioned—but the counſel of *Mhir Hubbeeb* was not loſt upon *Sumſeer Khan*; a man, poſſeſſed of every requiſite, for carrying it into effectual execution; he was brave, artful, beloved and highly eſteemed by his officers and ſoldiers, who to a man was united with him in a ſolemn vow, to take an exemplary revenge for the death and indignities of their late lamented commander, or periſh in the attempt.

November 1747. With this determined view *Sumſeer Khan* began his march, and being arrived within a few hours of *Patna* on the oppoſite ſhore of the river, he deſpatched a letter to *Jeyndî Amet Khan*, couched in the following terms, "that his heart had felt the "deepeſt compunction for his paſt conduct, "to which he had been inſtigated by the "raſh counſels of his late commanding "officer, that he appealed to *Jeyndî Amet* "himſelf, to witneſs for the proved fidelity "he had always ſhown for the ſervice and "intereſt of the Soubah his uncle, that "he had now raiſed a faithful and tried "body of officers and troops, who with "him were ready to devote their lives to "his commands, againſt the common ene-"mies of his houſe and country; hoped "he ſhould obtain permiſſion to viſit him, "and in a perſonal conference, give him "more convincing proofs of his attach-"ment and ſubmiſſion."

Jeyndî Amet Khan, immediately communicated the contents of this letter to his father *Hodjee*, who was very lately arrived at *Patna*, brought thither by ſome informations the brothers had received of the concerted ſcheme between *Sumſeer Khan* and *Mhîr Hubbeeb*, for the plunder of that capital—*Hodjee* without

without a moment's hesitation ordered his son to encourage *Sumseer Khan*'s visit, and cut him off, telling him, he himself would direct the means.

Jeyndi Amet Khan, much averse to obey these orders, determined to wait those of his uncle to whom he wrote, and transmitted a copy of *Sumseer Khan*'s letter, and in the mean time returned in civil terms a reply to the *Patan* General, telling him "he "had forwarded the purport of his request "to the Soubah, but that he could not give "any conclusive answer thereto, before the "Soubah's pleasure was known."—This soon reached him, in these few, but peremptory words, "Regarding the business "between us and *Sumseer Khan*, follow "the orders of your father."

Hodjee directed *Jeyndi Amet Khan* to write to the *Patan* General, "that he "should with pleasure receive his visits, "and rejoice to embrace him, as the Sou-"bah had readily accepted the tender of "his services, and wished his speedy march "to *Morshadabad*."—To which purport the Usurper had likewise wrote to him in pressing terms, thereby intending to lull him into the greater security.

We have already hinted the method proposed by *Mhir Hubbeeb* to the two *Patan* Generals, for taking off the Nabob of *Patna*, and plundering the city; the intelligence the brothers had received extended only to the latter part of their scheme; of the intended assassination of the Nabob they had not the least conception.—*Hodjee's* counter-plot for the murder of *Sumseer Khan*, was concerted in manner following: a day was appointed for the General's visit to *Jeyndi Amet Khan*, on a plain a small distance North of the city, where a sumptuous tent was prepared for his reception; in the floor of which a mine was sunk, whose train extended some distance from the tent: the signal for putting fire to the train was *Jeyndi Amet Khan's* withdrawing a certain space from the tent.—Every circumstance of which was betrayed to *Sumseer Khan*, by a *Patan* in the service and confidence of *Hodjee*.

On the receipt of the Usurper's and the Nabob's letters, *Sumseer Khan* passed the river with his troops about two miles to the Northward of the city, and being advanced on the day appointed within a furlong of the tent, he received a polite message from the Nabob, requesting "that he would

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favor

" favor him in ordering his troops to halt,
" that they might not in their conference
" be incommoded by the duft, for that he
" himſelf was only attended by fifty fol-
" lowers." — This requeſt was inſtantly complied with, and the *Patan* General proceeded to the tent with a few ſelected attendants only, all of whom were provided with armour under their coats.

They met in mutual embraces, and with the moſt affectionate compliments, theſe over they ſeated themſelves, and began to confer upon the operations of the war againſt the common enemy the *Mahrattors*. — After about an hour's diſcourſe, a ſervant came and whiſpered the Nabob, who ſoon after aroſe, telling the General " that he was juſt going to give ſome ne-
" ceſſary orders for his reception and en-
" tertainment in the city, and ſhould at-
" tend him again in a few minutes." — When he had got half way to the door of the tent, *Sumſeer Khan* and his attendants drew their ſcymitars, fell upon *Feyndi Ahmet Khan*, killed him, and all that were in the tent, before they had time to make any reſiſtance; ſome inſtantly flew to the head of the train to which they were perfectly inſtructed, and prevented fire being put to

ing for on the alarm, thoſe who were on the outſide of the tent, and thereby eſcaped the ſlaughter, fled with all ſpeed to the city.

Sumſeer Khan made a ſignal for his troops to advance, and mounting his horſe gained the city almoſt as ſoon as the fugitives, and entered it ſword in hand with his ſoldiers, before *Hodjee Hamet* had received the leaſt intelligence of the unhappy fate of his beloved ſon.

Sumſeer Khan proceeded immediately to the palace, where with little reſiſtance, he took *Hodjee Hamet* priſoner, at the very moment he was (in diſguiſe) making his eſcape, and after ſecuring him under a ſtrong guard, went in ſearch of the principal *treaſures* of the city, (to which he was minutely directed by his ſpies) theſe he depoſited in the palace, and gave up the town to be plundered by the ſoldiers, who for the ſpace of three days committed every ravage and outrage that revenge and avarice, backed by uncontrolled power could meditate and execute; except againſt the Engliſh, French, and Dutch factories, which alone remained unmoleſted and exempt from ruin.

Hadjee Hamet, after ſuffering the heavieſt reproaches and revilings from *Sumſeer Khan*, for his baſe ingratitude, treachery, and cruelty to *Muſtapha Khan*; and after undergoing a hundred and one laſhes from the ſevere diſcipline of the *Kborah*, was by order of the general ſet on an aſs, with his legs tied under the belly of the animal, and his face painted half black, half white, and thus led round the city, the ſame rout himſelf had appointed for the head of the unfortunate *Muſtapha Khan*.—Returning from this diſgraceful progreſs, the diſcipline of the *Kborah* was again inflicted on him, not only as a puniſhment, but with a view to extort from him a confeſſion and diſcovery of a large ſum in gold and diamonds, which, it was ſaid he had buried or otherwiſe ſecreted;—but he bore the laſh with amazing conſtancy, and made not the diſcovery that was aimed at.—After this he was chained to the leg of an elephant,—to that very elephant, on which the head of *Muſtapha Khan* was expoſed and elevated: *Sumſeer Khan* had doomed him to a cruel and lingering death, but one of his guards, touched with his great age, the high dignity he had born, his cruel ſufferings, and heavy lamentations for his murdered ſon, conveyed in pity to him a doſe

of

of poiſon, which he greedily ſwallowed and put an end to his miſerable being.

Sumſee Khan, after this exemplary vengeance, made a ſhort ſtay at *Patna*, and returned to his country with an immenſe booty, but without any further regard, at leaſt for the preſent, to the engagements that ſubſiſted between him and *Mhir Hubbeeb*.

The fates of *Hodjee Hamet* and *Seyndi Hamet Khan*, met a very different regard from the world, the latter being as much lamented, as the memory of his father was deteſted; but it may be very eaſily conceived the loſs of both proved a heavy ſtroke of affliction to the Uſurper, who now became as eminently wretched as he was great; his grief on the arrival of the news was ſuch, that it was with the greateſt difficulty he was prevented following them.—However, cool reflection ſoon took place, and his uſual fortitude ſurmounted in a few days the firſt violent impreſſions of his irreparable misfortune, and obliged him to attend the concerns of his government, to which he was rouſed and ſtimulated by the ſpirited, wiſe and affectionate repreſentations of his *Begum*—A woman whoſe wiſdom, magnanimity, benevolence, and every amiable

able quality, affected high honor on her ſex and ſtation; ſhe much influenced the Uſurper's councils, and was ever conſulted by him in every material movement in the ſtate, except when ſanguinary and treacherous meaſures were judged neceſſary, which he knew ſhe would oppoſe as ſhe ever condemned them when perpetrated however ſucceſsful, — predicting always that ſuch politics would end in the ruin of his family.

Though the Uſurper's critical ſituation called him to action, yet the death of his nephew ever after remained a heavy preſſure upon his heart; he greatly loved him, and had deſigned him his ſucceſſor in the government of the Soubahſhip in preference to *Hodjee's* eldeſt ſon, who then bore the title of the Emperor's Dewan, (to which he had juſt as much right as his uncle had to that of Soubah) but this deſign being blaſted by the untimely deceaſe of *Feyndt Amet*, and this occaſioned by the pernicious policy of his brother and himſelf: The only amends in his power to make to the manes of his murdered nephew, was to tranſfer the affection he ever bore him to *his* eldeſt ſon *Mhirza Mahommed*, whom he immediately adopted as his own; and this youth

youth was from that period looked upon as his ſucceſſor.

October 1747. Until the rains broke up in *October* 1747, the Uſurper remained unmoleſted, but now the *Mahrattors* re-entered the province of *Bengal* by the *Birbobeen* hills, and *Sumſeer Khan* having ſafely lodged his *Patna* plunder returned and entered *Bahar*, at laſt remindful of his engagement to *Mhir Hubbeeb*, and hoping by a union with the *Mahrattors to ſhare* at leaſt the plunder alſo of *Morſhadabad*.

The Uſurper had taken the field very early — and on the firſt advice that *Sumſeer Khan* had entered *Bahar*, he advanced towards him by rapid marches, thirſting to revenge his brother's and nephew's deaths, and depending that he ſhould be able to engage and defeat him, before the *Mahrattors* could poſſibly join him: Whilſt he was in this purſuit, the *Mahrattors*, who did not think it eligible to riſque an action with the Uſurper until they had joined their new allies, were on full march to the ſettled rendezvous at *Bogolpore*, near which place the three armies arrived about the ſame time in the night. The Uſurper encamped, and ſent out his ſpies for intelligence,

gence, they ſoon returned and informed him he was encamped between the enemies armies, the *Patans* a corſe to the Northward of him, and the *Maharattors* about the ſame diſtance to the Southward.—This perilous ſituation would have ſtruck any but this brave Uſurper with alarm and terror; ſome of his general officers propoſed his taking the advantage of the night, and attempt a ſilent retreat to *Sicygully*; but he rejected this overture with high indignation.—He was perfectly acquainted with the different genius and diſpoſition of the enemies he had to encounter, and from this knowledge formed his reſolutions; the only reſource left him was inſtantly obvious to this conſummate general and ſoldier.

At midnight he held a council of war, of three or four of his principal officers only; to theſe he opened his deſigns, and directed them to iſſue orders for the troops to be ready to march half an hour before day break, without ſtriking their tents—ſtrictly prohibiting they ſhould encumber themſelves with aught but their arms, for that his own, his officers, and ſoldiers baggage ſhould be left in the camp, for which he himſelf would be accountable to them.

—Theſe orders diſtributed he went to reſt.

Before day break the Uſurper put himſelf at the head of his troops, and marched to attack the *Patans*, leaving his camp ſtanding—he found them prepared to receive him, not doubting but their allies whoſe ſituation they had learnt, would attack his rear.—A bloody engagement enſued, in which the Uſurper might juſtly ſay, with another great uſurper, "that he had many "times fought *for Empire*, but in this bat-"tle, *for Life*."—After an obſtinate conteſt *Samſeer Khan* was ſlain, and the *Patans* put to flight—inſtead of purſuing them he immediately returned in good order to his camp, where, as he had foreſeen, he found the *Mahrattors* plundering it, confuſedly diſperſed, and regardleſs of the commands of their General or Officers:—In this ſituation the Uſurper fell upon them, and after a great ſlaughter gave them a total defeat and rout. After theſe exploits he returned triumphantly to his capital.

Notwithſtanding theſe glorious ſucceſſes, he was inceſſantly harraſſed by, and forced to be ever in the field againſt the *Mahrattors*

1757 until the year 1759, when he made a last-ing peace with them on the terms recited in the "Short sketch of the history of *Bengal*" before-mentioned, to which we beg leave to refer; there the reader may if he pleases follow this great wicked man, "*through* "*the most pleasing scenes of domestick life and* "*public tranquillity.*" We shall content ourselves in closing this chapter and second general head, with a few circumstances which happened in consequence of his natural demise, *Anno* 1756.—It is pretty well known, and has been by us severely felt, that he was succeeded by *Mhirza Mahommed* his adopted son and grandson (who assumed the title of *Surajud Dowla*) in the government; that after he had quelled a stand that was made to his succession by part of his own family, he directed his arms against our settlements, took, and destroyed them.—The *causes* for that invasion of property, have been faithfully investigated and presented to the public in a second edition of "India Tracts," published *March*, 1764.—This short recapitulation would have had no place here, but to introduce a circumstance not so well known as the foregoing.

When *Surajud Dowla* declared his resolution to attack and drive the English out of

of Bengal, he was opposed by the affection-
ate remonstrances of the destined victim
Kasim's Begum already [illegible] with
every argument which love and unwearied
assiduity could devise, she labored to dis-
suade him from his purpose, but labored to
no end; for though the young tyrant pre-
served some reverence for her person, yet
her influence was not great; but when she
found him deaf to her intreaties she had
the courage to tell him, "She saw his own
"fate was blended with, and waited on
"the destruction he was aiming to accom-
"plish against the English, and that if he
"persisted, his rashness and injustice would
"not only be the cause of his own death,
"but the total ruin of his family." Her wis-
dom and foresight was so great and exten-
sive, that it was commonly said by the Usur-
per, "He never knew her judgment or
"predictions fail."

We hope to meet with pardon for doing honor to the character of this extraordinary woman, especially as we thereby embrace a favorable opportunity of discharging the tribute of sincere gratitude particularly due from us,—the author owing life and liber-ty to her humane and successful interces-sion.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

HAVING in the preceding chapter ſhewn from what cauſes, and by what gradations theſe provinces fell under the uſurpation of *Aliverdi Khan*, our plan leads us next to convey a ſummary account of their produce, the diviſion of their principals, diſtricts, and towns, with their ſituation reſpecting each other, and their commonly eſtimated diſtance from our principal ſettlement of *Calcutta*.

Geographers have diſtinguiſhed theſe provinces by the title of *the rich kingdom of Bengal*, an epithet it highly merited when conſidered in its original ſtate of opulence and tranquillity; in which point of view we intend to exhibit it, for this prevalent reaſon only, that we think it perfectly capable of being re-inſtated and improved, a circumſtance well worthy our *preſent* attention and knowledge.

To form a juſt eſtimate of the value and importance of theſe provinces, we muſt conſider them at the period when they were governed by the younger princes of the Blood Royal, that is, ſome years before *Jaffier Khan*'s Soubahſhip; for in his time they firſt began to decline and decreaſe in their worth, from cauſes already inveſtigated in our laſt general head.

From his demiſe, the country for a few years recovered, and began to flouriſh until within two years of the deceaſe of *Sujah Khan*; when by the rapacity of *Hodjee Hamet*, the Rajahs and Zemindars were again cruelly oppreſſed and plundered, and thereby diſabled from making good their contracts to the government.—Soon after this period commenced the uſurpation of *Aliverdi Khan*, that drew on the *Mahratter* invaſion, which overwhelmed the country in miſeries of every kind for the full ſpace of eight years.

The peace which the Uſurper made with theſe invaders, *Anno* 1750, ſeemed for four or five years to promiſe the reſtoration of vigour to this haraſſed country; but its ſhattered conſtitution was ſcarcely beginning to revive, when the raſh conduct of the ſuc-

ſucceeding young tyrant reduced it again to eminent peril; a juſt vengeance and neceſſity drew the Engliſh arms againſt him and his country, which produced a revolution fatal to himſelf and family;—neceſſity again, produced a ſecond revolution;—wantonneſs a third, and when we ſhall ſtop, time alone can diſcloſe.—A few individuals may benefit by this ſhifting ſyſtem, but total ruin to the trade of the provinces and to the Company muſt manifeſtly in the end be the conſequence of this continued warfare if not timely prevented, notwithſtanding the flattering fallacious ſucceſs of our arms.

The foregoing ſhort recapitulation we thought neceſſary, to vindicate our concluſion, that no perfect judgment can be made of the value of this eſtimable country from any period of time within the laſt forty years, during which ſpace, with few and ſhort interruptions it has been involved in war, and labored under difficulties that have impaired it's very vitals: Thence the neceſſity of our giving a picture of it in a permanent ſettled government, when the lands were permitted to yield their produce unmoleſted, when the manufactures and every branch of trade flouriſhed, and when the rents, revenues, and cuſtoms reſulting from

that happy ſtate, proves it to have been as valueable a ſpot as any upon this globe, if not the moſt ſo.

To this deſireable ſtate we repeat from our perfect knowledge and experience, it is capable of being reſtored under a *proper government*; if it was not, our preſent labors were vain, and could anſwer no end or purpoſe. What eſſential end and purpoſe they are calculated to obtain, we ſhall now venture to open; and as I have no motive to influence me but ſincere gratitude to my former employers, and true love for my country, I truſt my endeavours will meet with candour and thanks—at leaſt from the public, if not from that *reſpectable body of men*, for whoſe benefit they are more particularly intended.

Notwithſtanding the plauſible face of ſucceſs our affairs in *Bengal* may wear at preſent, by late advices from thence, it is as demonſtrable as any propoſition in Euclid, that they cannot produce the great and eſſential end aimed at, *viz.* a laſting peace and ſettled government, without which, the Company muſt ſink under the preſſure of a long expenſive war, which not only ſwallows up their new acquired

revenues,

revenues, but impedes and ſhackles their trade in every inſtance, ſhape, and form: In proſecution of this war, the heads of their ſervants abroad are turned and bewildered, and their mercantile buſineſs (which only can ſupport the Company in the end) muſt ſuffer under unavoidable neglects and abuſes. The gentlemen at home in the direction of affairs, muſt labor under heavy embarraſſments in conducting the two branches of war and trade, either of which would fully employ their whole time and attention.

A trading and a fighting company, is a two headed monſter in nature that cannot exiſt long, as the expence and inexperience of the latter, muſt exceed, confound, and deſtroy every profit or advantage gained by the former;—new *temporary* victories, ſtimulate and puſh us on to graſp at new acquiſitions of territory; theſe call for a large increaſe of military force to defend them; and thus we ſhall go on, graſping and expending, until we cram our hands ſo full that they become cramped and numbed, and we ſhall be obliged to quit and relinquiſh, even that part which we might have held faſt if bounds had been ſet to our progreſs,

which (upon the preſent ſyſtem) we now ſee is utterly impoſſible, therefore a total change in our politics becomes indiſpenſably neceſſary.

The gentlemen in the direction muſt ſurely ſee this fatal tendency of their affairs, and muſt tremble at it—but where's the remedy? they will ſay—it has been already pointed out, and no regard paid to it—poſſibly, though convinced, they want the public ſanction to a ſtep they may think ſo extraordinary — though every day they are taking ſteps more extraordinary, in ſupporting their ſervants in a war againſt the Mogul, his Vice-Roys, and ſubjects, which on the preſent plan muſt unavoidably prove the ruin of the company.—We have a conſiderable concern in this ſtock, and therefore claim a right to ſpeak—when private remonſtrances fail, public ones may acquire a due influence.

Why we ſhould wantonly perſiſt in a in a ſtate of deſtructive war, with a potentate whoſe alliance is ſo materially neceſſary to us, when we have it ſo much in our power to make a uſeful friend of him and his ſucceſſors, is a conduct that ſurpaſſes human

human underſtanding; and yet that ſuch has been our conduct for five years paſt is moſt certain.

Let us have done with this ringing changes upon Soubahs, there's no end to it; let us boldly dare to be Soubah *ourſelves*, our own terms have been more than once offered to us by the Emperor, why ſhould we longer heſitate to accept them? we have not ſcrupled to ſeize and poſſeſs part of his territory with violence, ſurely it would be more conſcientious, and more conſiſtent with the laws of nature and nations to hold the whole of theſe provinces under him, by his own appointment—that this would be readily aſſented to on his part, if a proper overture came from us, is not to be doubted; the conſideration of his own great and obvious advantages, and the neceſſities of his ſituation would leave him no room for choice.

We have already convinced him, we are able when we have a mind to ſet our own ruin and the lives of our fellow ſubjects at nought, to hold this part of his country from him, in ſpite of his ſtrongeſt efforts againſt us; nay, poſſibly we might retain it under our ſubjection for ſome ſhort time at leaſt,

but the conſequence to him and us is obvious, a wanton expence of blood and treaſure, while the object we are contending for is daily more and more deſolated by this contention, and bye and bye will not be worth the poſſeſſion of either—for every movement that does not tend to a laſting and firm peace by advantaging both, is fruitleſs, and can have no permanent or ſalutary effect; and moſt ſure it is, that the plan we have hitherto purſued, and are ſtill purſuing, cannot accompliſh that deſireable iſſue.

It is true we have ſeen our forces in the Eaſt, under the conduct of an able and active commander, drive the Mogul's Vice-Roys out of the provinces; it is alſo true, that we have ſeen a ſpirited conduct and bravery in the Mogul's troops, that ought juſtly to ſtrike us with apprehenſion of future conſequences. The *Ruſſians* when firſt attacked by *Sweden*, did not poſſeſs a tenth part of the courage and diſcipline that theſe our enemies have now acquired, and yet the event is known to the world.—Let us reaſon upon very probable ſuppoſitions, and not reſt in a too great and flattering ſecurity, at a time when we have the greateſt cauſe to be alarmed.

Suppoſe the Mogul's Vice-Roys ſhould from experience at laſt evidently ſee, that the only way to conquer us, and render our courage and diſcipline of none effect, is to avoid ever coming to a *general action* with us; with the great ſuperiority of numbers they will ever be able to bring into the field, they may by this precaution and dividing their army (which conſiſts chiefly of cavalry) into ſmall bodies, cut off our proviſions and forage, beat up our quarters, harraſs our handful of men without ceaſing, and finally deſtroy us without danger to themſelves—and is it improbable they ſhould at laſt adopt this conduct? we pronounce, no, it is moſt probable they will as the only reſource left for them.

Let us again, ſuppoſe a rupture with *France*, whilſt we are engaged in this war with the Mogul, our preſidency of Fort *William*, and our other factories in a manner deſerted, and the chief ſtrength of all our ſettlements acting at the diſtance of eight or nine hundred miles from the center of our poſſeſſions.—We will not ſuppoſe a rupture with *France* near, but let it come when it will, it ſets at nought the article in the laſt treaty of peace, which gave us an excluſive right to *Bengal*, and therefore ought

ought to be attended to; for it is not to be imagined, that they will neglect ſo favourable an occaſion of attacking a ſettlement, that conſtitutes in the Eaſt the very eſſence of our being, when they find it left defenceleſs by the abſence of our troops.

In ſhort, every conſideration calls aloud for a period being put to this unprofitable, and precarious war, by ſome other plan of operations, and we aſſert none is ſo eligible, honourable or practicable, as that we have now hinted at.—We have nibbled at theſe provinces for eight years, and notwithſtanding an immenſe acquiſition of territory and revenue, what benefit has reſulted from our ſucceſſes, to the company? are their dividends raiſed to the late ſtandard of eight *per Cent*. no—it is impoſſible they ſhould whilſt this deſtructive expenſive conteſt exiſts—and ſhall we thus go on, nibbling and nibbling at the *bait*, until the trap falls and cruſhes us?—but to come more immediately to the point.

Permit us moſt humbly to adviſe, that expreſs orders be ſent without delay to your Preſident and Governor of *Fort William*, to make the following overture of peace to the Mogull; viz. " That on condition of

" his

" his appointing and inveſting (to all intents
" purpoſes) your Governor for the time
" being, Soubah of the Provinces of *Bengal*,
" *Bahar*, and *Oriſſa*, you will engage on your
" part, that the ſtipulated ſum of one khorore
" of rupees, ſhall be annually paid into the
" royal treaſury, free of all deductions."

As this ſum near doubles the ſtipulation made by the uſurper *Aliverdi Khan*, with the Vizir *Munſoor Ali Khan*, *Anno* 1750, (a tythe of which by the bye was never paid) and we venture to ſay, *re-doubles in one year*, any advantages the Emperors have received from the revenues of theſe provinces, for the ſpace *of forty years laſt paſt*; we cannot entertain a doubt of his moſt readily acceding to the terms propoſed, as thereby he would alſo ſecure a powerful ally, who could be occaſionally of ſervice to him on any emergency, in his government.

When we are inveſted with, and empowered to diſplay the Mogul's royal ſtandard, the provinces will be eaſily governed and kept in ſubjection, at a leſs annual expence and force, than the Company are now from neceſſity loaded with—but ſuppoſe it double, the *ſtake* is amply ſufficient, as we ſhall preſently demonſtrate.

Some

Some narrow minds, ſtrangers to the nature of the country and government will ſtart, and make the greatneſs of the object a bugbear to their hopes and wiſhes—was it poſſible, that the Company could unmoleſted enjoy what they have got, and purſue their trade without interruption; we ſhould be amongſt the firſt that might juſtly exclaim againſt their extending their views; —but, that this was impracticable, we have long foreſeen and publicly declared;—and if we think at all, we muſt now be convinced there is no medium, or alternative, but this, that can be adopted with any ſemblance of ſecurity or permanency—— *aut Soubah, aut nullus,* muſt now be our motto.

We cannot enough applaud the ſeaſonable meaſure of ſending out Lord *Clive,* which we eſteem a happy event; notwithſtanding, what could be done upon the preſent plan of politics, has been done without him—the weight of his Lordſhip's reputation and experience in thoſe parts will moſt eſſentially promote this our new plan; he is the beſt qualified to negotiate it, the fitteſt to be firſt inveſted with that high power, and the moſt capable of fixing and leaving it upon a ſolid baſis.—That theſe

are

are our real ſentiments, flowing from a juſt regard to his Lordſhip's character, I think the public will not doubt, as they already know, we lie under no obligations to that quarter, that might excite our partiality.

— We are very ſenſible our *rulers* at home do not like to have the affairs of the Company, the ſubject of public diſquiſition, but as *they* and their affairs, are now truly become a very important national concern, and their own inteſtine quarrels have given a latitude to make their conduct the ſport of every pen, we think there needs the leſs apology for the liberty we now take; as one of our chief motives is to extricate *them* from the difficulties, we imagine they muſt be plunged in at this period; and no drowning man will ſurely be angry at another, who ſtretches out a friendly hand to ſave him from ſinking?—The pointing out a meaſure to them, that muſt if it takes place in a very ſhort ſpace, mount their ſtock in ſubſtantial real value to five hundred, will not hurt them or the proprietors.

But it may be aſked us, if theſe only are your motives, why not intimate the meaſure in private to our chairman or court of directors? Why not communicate it, and enforce

enforce it, at a quarterly general court? Why not call a general court *on ſpecial matters?* Why are our affairs and ſchemes to be canvaſſed by the public? Have patience my friends, and we will anſwer theſe interrogatories by one prevalent reaſon that determines us, to adopt neither of them.—*Private* intimations for *public good*, leave the *parties intruſted*, at large, and without public check, to concur with, or *reject* and lay aſide, the means propoſed, as caprice, want of comprehenſion, particular private views, or divided counſels, may chance to influence:—but when *publicly made, they* then become accountable *to the world.*—In aſſigning this reaſon, we muſt not be thought to inſinuate any doubt, injurious to the honor and integrity of the preſent Chairman, or preſent court of Directors, whom from the ſincerity of our heart, we believe as much attached to the true intereſt of the *Eaſt India* Company, as any ſet of gentlemen who ever ſat at that board.

Our wiſh is, to promote the well being of the *Eaſt India* Company, and not intentionally to give offence to any, and if our propoſed plan meets not the approbation and concurrence of thoſe who will moſt benefit by the event; we can only lament

ment their loſs and our own.—It appears by a correſpondence laid before the public laſt year, that we urged the neceſſity of *this meaſure* in the year 1760; glorious! would have been the iſſue for the company, had it been then carried into execution; and happy! for many unfortunate individuals, who ſince periſhed by a contrary ſyſtem of politics.—There would then have been no call or neceſſity, for this Nabob-changing ſcheme, the provinces would have been eſtabliſhed in peace: and war, revolutions, murders, and maſſacres, without a being—however, from a thorough conviction we ſay, it is not now too late to regain the happy opportunity we then loſt; nay, ſubſequent events, rather encourage and afford a more favorable aſpect, as it may be accompliſhed now under leſs difficulties, than we ſhould at that period have had to encounter and ſtruggle with.—In this confidence we ſhall proceed, and by a rough ſketch of the produce of the revenues, ſhow the vaſt ſtake we throw for, if we win, the gain will be immenſe, if we fail in the attempt, we are but where we were, and at the worſt, ſhall have it in our power to reſume our *old Dog Trot* policy again.

At *Natoor*, about ten day's travels North East of *Calcutta*, reſides the family of the moſt ancient and opulent of the *Hindoo* Princes of *Bengall*. *Rajah Rhaam Khaunt* of the race of *Bramins*, who deceaſed in the year 1748, and was ſucceeded by his wife, a Princeſs named *Bowanny Rhaante*, whoſe Dewan, or Miniſter, was Diaram of the *Teely* caſt, or Tribe; they poſſeſs a tract of country of about thirty five days travel *; and under a ſettled government, their ſtipulated annual rents to the crown was ſeventy lac of *Sicca* rupees, —— the real revenues about one khorore and a half.

The chief towns of theſe diſtricts are, *Malda*, *Hurrial*, *Seerpore*, *Balekooſhy*, and *Cogmarry*; all ſeparately famous for manufacturing the following ſpecies of piece goods, viz. for the *Europe* markets, coſſaes, elatches, hummums, chowtahs, ootally ſoofies, ſeerſuchers and raw-ſilk: — for the markets of *Buſſorah*, *Mocha*, *Judda*, *Pegu*,

* The *Gentoo*'s eſtimate diſtances by corſes, but more commonly by a day's journey, which they reckon five corſe, but as the corſe varies in different diſtricts, from one and a half to two and a half miles *Engliſh*, we take the medium days travels at ten *Engliſh* miles.

jobs, ordinary kenchees, &c. &c.

This country produces alſo, copeſs, or *Bengal* cotton, with which the above ſorts of goods are in part manufactured; but the produce does not bear any proportion to the conſumption, ſo that they are indebted to foreign markets for this article, and chiefly to the port of *Surat*.

The towns of *Bewangunge*, *Sidgunge*, *Surupgunge*, and *Jummaulgunge*, are all famous markets for grain; as their names imply.

Contiguous to this laſt mentioned diſtrict, but ſtill more to the North Eaſt lies the lands of *Rajah Prannaut* of the Koyt, or Scribe Caſt; his diſtrict extends about fifty days travel, moſtly low lands, and in great part annually overflowed; his ſtipulated yearly payment, twenty lac, the real produce of his revenue, from ſixty to ſeventy—the chief products of his country are grain, oil, and ghee, (an article much much uſed in *Indian* cookery) it likewiſe yields ſome ſpecies of piece goods and raw ſilk, alſo foole ſugar, lump jaggre, ginger,

long pepper, and piplymol—articles that uſually compoſe the gruff cargoes of our outward bound ſhipping.

The principle towns of this diſtrict, are *Rungpore*, *Gooragat*, and *Santoſe Buddaal*, the capital reſidence of the head of this family; from theſe *Arungs*, the *Eaſt India* companies are ſupplied with ſannoos, mulmulls, tanjebs and raw-ſilk.

The great market of *Bugwan Gola* *, is ſupplied from this diſtrict, with the three important articles of grain, oil, and ghee,—and now we have occaſion to mention this mart, it is not foreign to our purpoſe to dwell a little longer on it—it is ſituate on the *Ganges*, about a day and half North from *Morſhadabad*, and two days South Eaſterly of *Rajamhol*, and is the greateſt market for the above-mentioned articles in *Indoſtan*, or poſſibly in the known world. The cuſtoms on grain only amount to three lac of rupees *per Annum*—all the cuſtoms and duties of *Bagwan Gola*, rank in the liſt of revenues, under the head of *Khoſi Mhol*, that is, duties which are kept in the governments hands, and not farmed out.

* *Gola* ſignifies a granary, and *Gunge* a grain market.

This

This place is defended on the land ſide by a ditch and palliſadoes, and is always in troubleſome times garriſoned by a thouſand horſe and a thouſand foot.—In the year 1743 it was four times attacked by the *Maharattors*, under *Boſchar Punait* and *Aliheg*, who were as often repulſed---It is a place of ſuch importance to the ſouhah, that the command of the garriſon is always beſtowed on the moſt experienced and truſt worthy officer he has in his ſervice; the whole of its revenues being uſually valued in peaceable times at thirty lac *per Annum*, in the beginning of the year 1750, it was again attacked by the *Maharattors*, taken and plundered of an immenſe booty.

North Weſt of *Fort William*, and about three days and a half diſtant, lie the lands of *Rajah Tilluck Chund*, extending twelve days travel; the ſtipulated rents of theſe lands, thirty-two lac *per Annum*, but its real produce and value, from eighty lac to one khorore. This is the principal of the three diſtricts ceded in perpetuity to the company, by the treaty with *Coſſim Ali Khan* in the year 1760.

It's principal towns are *Burdwan*, *Kirty*, *Radnagore*, *Dewangunge* and *Ballikiſſagur*;

theſe ſupply the *Eaſt India* companies with the following ſortments of piece goods, viz. doorcas, terrandams, cuttanies, ſooſies, ſoot romaals, gurras, ſeſterſoys, ſanton coupees, cherriderries, chilys, cuſtas and dooſoota's; the capital *Burdwan*, may be properly called the center of the trade of the provinces, in tranquil times, this place afforded an annual large vend for the valuable ſtaples of lead, copper, broad cloth, tin, pepper and tootanague. The *Puggiah* merchants from *Delhy* and *Agra*, reſorted yearly to this great mart, and would again if peace was eſtabliſhed in the country:——they purchaſed the above ſtaples, either with money, or in barter for opium, tincal, ſalt petre and horſes.

This diſtrict produces raw-ſilk and coposs, ſufficient only for manufactoring their ſooſies, cuttanees and gurras.—The leſſer towns manufacture other inferior ſortments of cloth, as ſeerbunds, gollabunds, &c.—it produces grain equal to the conſumption of the people only.

Burdumaan, the proper name of the diſtrict, is high, better peopled, and better cultivated than any part of the three provinces;

vinces; bleſſings! that cauſed it every year, more particularly to become a prey to the *Mabaratters*, as before recited.

The family of this Rajah farmed lands to the amount of four lac *per Annum*, contiguous to the bounds of *Calcutta*, and had a palace at *Beallah*, about ſeven miles South of it—the Fort of *Buzbudjee* on the *Ganges*, was alſo their property.

To the Weſt of *Burdwan*, ſomething Northerly lie the lands belonging to the family of *Rajah Gopaul Sing*, of the *Raaz-poot Bramin* tribe; they poſſeſs an extent of ſixteen days travel, this diſtrict produces an annual revenue of between thirty and forty lac; but from the happineſs of his ſituation, he is perhaps the moſt independant Rajah of *Indoſtan*, having it always in his power to overflow his country, and drown any enemy that comes againſt him; as happened at the beginning of *Sujah Khan*'s government, who ſent a ſtrong body of horſe to reduce him, theſe he ſuffered to advance far into his country, then opening the dams of the rivers deſtroyed them to a man; this action deterred any ſubſequent attempts to reduce him—but if the frontiers of the diſtrict were ſo inveſted, as to pre-

vent the exit of the merchandize of his country, which might eaſily be done, he would be preſently brought to obedience, and glad to compound for a tribute of twenty lac *per Annum*; as it is, he can hardly be ſaid to acknowledge any allegiance to the Mogul or Soubah, he ſome years deigns to ſend to the Soubah, an acknowledgement by way of ſalaamy (or preſent) of 15,000 rupees, ſometimes 20,000, and ſome years not any thing at all, as he happens to be diſpoſed.

But in truth it would be almoſt cruelty to moleſt theſe happy people, for in this diſtrict, are the only veſtiges of the beauty, purity, piety, regularity, equity and ſtrictneſs of the ancient *Indoſtan* government. Here the property, as well as the liberty of the people, are inviolate, here no robberies are heard of, either private or public; the traveller, either with, or without merchandize, on his entering this diſtrict, becomes the immediate care of the government, which allots him guards without any expence, to conduct him from ſtage to ſtage, and theſe are accountable for the ſafety and accommodation of his perſon and effects.—At the end of the firſt ſtage, he is delivered over with certain benevolent formalities to the

 guards

guards of the next, who after interrogating the traveller, as to the usage he had received in his journey, dismisses the first guard with a written certificate of their behaviour, and a receipt for the traveller and his effects, which certificate or receipt are returnable to the commanding officer of the first stage, who registers the same, and regularly reports it to the Rajah.

In this form the traveller is passed through the country, and if he *only passes*, he is not suffered to be at any expence for food, accommodation, or carriage for his merchandize or baggage; but it is otherwise, if he is permitted to make any residence in one place above three days, unless occasioned by sickness, or any unavoidable accident.—If any thing is lost in this district, for instance a bag of money or other valuable, the person who finds it, hangs it upon the next tree, and gives notice to the nearest Chowkey or place of guard, the officer of which orders immediate publication of the same by beat of tomtom, or drum.

There are in this precinct, no less than three hundred and sixty considerable Pagoda's, or places of public worship, erected by this Rajah, and his ancestors.——The worship of the cow is here carried to so

great an extreme, that, if that animal meets with a *violent* death, the city, or village, to which it belonged goes into a general mourning and faſt, for three days, and are obliged from the Rajah to the meaneſt of the people to remain on the ſpot, where they firſt heard the publication of the accident; and are employed during that ſpace in performing various expiations, as directed in the *Shaſtah*; but more of this under a ſubſequent general head.

Biſnapore the capital, and chief reſidence of the Rajah, and which gives a name to the whole diſtrict, is alſo the chief ſeat of trade; the produce of the country conſiſts of ſhaal timbers (a wood equal in quality to the beſt of our oak) dammer lacca's, an inferior ſortment of raw-ſilk---and copoſs and grain ſufficient only for their conſumption; it is from this diſtrict that the *Eaſt India* Companies are chiefly ſupplied with the article of ſhell lacca.

North Weſt of *Biſnapore*, contiguous lie the territories of *Buddeir Jamma Khan*, ſon and ſucceſſor to *Aſtoola Khan*, a Mogul, and Prince of *Bierbobeen*.——How this *Mahommedan* family, originally crept in among the *Hindoo Rajahs*, we never could learn

learn with any preciſion; but think it proceeded from it's importance to the Mogul government, as being the paſs into *Bengal*, from which moſt danger of invaders was to be apprehended, and therefore the Emperor judged it expedient to have the government of this paſs in the hands of a Mahommedan Prince; the conquered Rajahs not being deemed truſt worthy.

The lands formerly poſſeſſed by this family, equalled in extent thoſe of *Biſnapore*, and yielded nearly the ſame articles of merchandize, and about the ſame revenue; but as ſoon as *Aliverdi Khan* uſurped the government of the Soubahſhip, he diveſted this Rajah (for ſo he is commonly called) of a great part of his country, and otherways oppreſſed him, which he had afterwards cauſe to repent, as we have before ſhewn) but notwithſtanding that, he remained taxed at ten lac *per Annum*.

The fertile part of his country is in the center of the *Bierbohеen* mountains, his chief reſidence the fortreſs of *Nagur*, and his principal town of trade, is *Illumbuzar*, from whence the *Eaſt India* Companies uſually had the greateſt part of their gurras provided; but the *Mahарattor* invaſion,

ſion occaſioned in a great meaſure this branch of trade to be transfered to the town of *Cutwah*.

North East of *Calcutta*, diſtant about three days journey lies *Kiſſnagur*, the fort and capital of *Rajah Kiſſen Chund*. He poſſeſſes a tract of country of about twelve days journey, and is taxed at nine Lac *per* annum, though his revenues exceed twenty five Lac; his principal towns are *Santipore*, *Nuddeah*, *Bouren*, &c. where mullmulls, coſſaes, and cotton yarn are manufactured for the Europe markets; the country produces copoſs and grain, but not ſufficient for exportation.

The revenues of the city of *Dacca* (once the capital of *Bengal*) at a low eſtimation amount, annually to two Khorore, proceeding from cuſtoms and duties levied on cloths, grain, oil, ghee, beetlenut, chank-metals, ſalt, and tobacco, &c.

The foregoing inſtances of the value of the lands in the province of *Bengal* only held by the Rajahs ſhall ſuffice, without our particulariſing thoſe held by the *Zemindars* ſcattered through the province; ſome of whom are very conſiderable land holders; theſe

theſe are generally taxed nearer the real value of their lands, than thoſe which are held by the Rajahs.

Time and occaſion preſſes, and will not permit us to enter minutely into a detail of the other branches of the revenues of this opulent country in times of ſettled peace, a bare mention of the principal remaining ſources will fully and amply juſtify the point we aim at, and ſhew the vaſt importance of the ſtake we are puſhing for.

The revenues of the city of *Patna*, and thoſe of the province of *Bahar*—the government of *Purnea*, *a rich Nabobſhip*—the revenues of the capital of *Morſhudabad*, the city of *Rajahmhol*, the towns and diſtricts of *Coſſimbuzar*, *Cutwah*, *Mereba*, *Buxbunder*, *Azimgunge*, *Jilinghee*, *Baaker Gunge*, *Rajapore*, ſeveral petty Nabobſhips and *Fowſdaarys*, &c. &c. &c.—the governments and diſtricts of *Midnapore*, and *Chitygongh*, already ceded to us by the treaty of 1760—and the *Purgunnahs* ceded by the treaty 1757, all held by a moſt precarious tenure whilſt this war with the government ſubſiſts.

We

We make no account of the province of *Oriſſa*, uſually eſtimated at one Khorore and a half, becauſe it is a moot point, whether the Emperor will engage in any equivalent plan of ſatisfaction for the *Mabarattors* evacuating it; be this as it may, if our general ſcheme ſucceeds, it would be worth *our* while to attempt the geting rid of them by fair means, as this province is greatly improvable, and conſtitutes a neceſſary frontier and barrier to *Bengal* on the South. We ſay nothing neither of the *Jagghier* lands, which are not taken into our eſtimate, though theſe are objects may be worth a future conſideration.

To ſum up the whole, we venture to ſtake our credit and veracity on the aſſertion, that the two provinces of *Bengal* and *Babar*, will fully yield a revenue of *eleven* Khorore *per*. annum, or 13,750,000 pounds ſterling—if it yields this under a deſpotic and tyranic government in times of peace and currency of trade, what may *we* not more expect from it's improvements under a mild and Britiſh one? To conclude, we repeat——

If we ſhould ſucceed in the attempt, great and glorious will be the Britiſh name in

thoſe

thoſe parts, and immenſe the gain to the company and nation—if we fail—nothing remains, but to obtain a laſting *peace* on almoſt any terms—for if this war continues much longer on the preſent ineffectual and expenſive footing, the company, as a company, cannot poſſibly ſupport it, and therefore they muſt be reduced to the neceſſity of applying to our own government, for more powerful and potent aids than they hitherto have been indulged and favored with, though this has we confeſs, been *pretty conſiderable already*. What right we have (I ſpeak as a proprietor) to claim or expect more — we leave to be reſolved by our honorable rulers.

With the above obvious concluſion, we cloſe this our third general head, and *firſt part* of our general work, and ſhall proceed to the diſcuſſion of our remaining five general heads in a ſecond part, as ſpeedily as leiſure and opportunity will permit.

POSTSCRIPT.

Having received intimation that a certain party intend again to make application to parliament, for an act to lay the *ſplitting* of

of East India ſtock under ſome reſtrictions, and having ſeriouſly conſidered this ſubject in we think a new point of view, we beg leave to be heard a few words relative to this matter, and a few more, touching the preſent mode of governing this company.

It is extraordinary that in the courſe of ſo much altercation before the general election laſt year, on the propriety or impropriety of ſpliting ſtock, two obvious conſiderations ſhould not (as we remember) have been ever urged in defence of this practice, which if duely weighed we humbly imagine, would determine parliament to diſcountenance, and throw out, any bill brought before them for the above-mentioned intended purpoſe.

That both parties in the laſt year's direction benefited themſelves by this practice, is inconteſtable, notwithſtanding the bold aſſertion and fallacious reaſon on one ſide, and the unmaſked hypocriſy of *their champion Verax.*——

It was aſſerted, " that neither the ſtock-
" holder could ſplit nor transfer, nor the
" transferer accept and vote conſiſtently
" with a good conſcience as a chriſtian, or

"an honeſt man."—To examine the foundation of this heavy charge, let us conſider the ſituation of every Eaſt India proprietor on the common plan of voting, at general courts or general elections.

The proprietor who holds 50,000*l.* original ſtock, and he who holds 500*l.* are, touching the government of this company, upon an equal footing. Strange! that a regulation ſo repugnant to equity and the nature of things, ſhould have ſo long ſubſiſted without amendment.

The *attachment* and *attention*, which every individual owes to the particular community he belongs, will, nay muſt be in proportion to the ſpecific *concern* and *part* he holds therein; therefore the proprietor who holds only 500*l.* ſtock, will be leſs attached and attentive, and more liable to be ſwayed and influenced to join in bad meaſures with deſigning men, than the proprietor who holds 50,000*l.* ſtock.—Therefore whilſt this inconſiſtent regulation ſubſiſts, and the letter of it ſtrictly adhered to, what remedy or means, has the proprietor of 50,000*l.* ſtock, to obtain an influence in the government of this company on any critical emergency in their affairs adequate

to his *concern* and *riſque*? but this very method of ſpliting and dividing his ſtock, conſequently every attempt to deprive him of this only reſource, is beyond doubt moſt unjuſt, and may tend to the deſtruction of the company, if they ſhould ever fall into the hands of a deſigning ſelf-intereſted and wicked ſet of directors.

To refute the charge of diſhoneſty in the action itſelf, we need only conſider it in compariſon with a tranſaction much more common, yet we conceive ſtrictly ſimilar to it.

A. borrows 500*l.* caſh of B. *on note of hand payable in any ſtipulated time*;—will any man be hardy enough to ſay, that this caſh is not the property of A. to all intents and purpoſes, during the time of poſſeſſion?—and could not A. conſcientiouſly and honeſtly ſwear it was ſo?—where then is the eſſential difference between borrowing 500*l.* caſh, or 500*l.* ſtock?—*Verax* will tell you (though he laughs in his ſleeve at the ſame time) "that A. borrows the "500*l.* caſh to convert to his own pri-"vate occaſions; but that the ſtock lent "and transfered to A. is the conſequence of "a private compact and colluſion between

"A,

" A. and B. in enable and qualify A. to " vote on that ſide of the queſtion it ſhall " pleaſe him to.—Be it ſo—yet the moment B. transfers, and A. accepts, this individual 500*l.* ſtock becomes the property of A. it has every eſſential of property, that property can have annexed to it—he can ſell, diſpoſe of, give it away, and expend it in any manner he pleaſes; and though he determines to hold it, yet it remains totally in his own breaſt on which ſide he will beſtow his vote, (as a certain party we believe found the laſt election, to their great diſappointment and diſgrace.) — *Verax* will again tell you, there is a counter obligation for A's replacing this individual ſtock. —In like manner A. is obliged to repay his 500*l.* caſh and take up his note, if in either caſe he fails B. has his remedy at law —— but A. may moſt truely ſwear either to be *bona fide* his property, whilſt they continue in his poſſeſſion, though he is accountable in the one caſe for repayment, and the other for replacing.

Touching the mode of governing this company, we beg leave to ſay, it never could, nor ever can be *well governed* on it's preſent inſtitution.—Would you have your court of directors reſpectable, reduce their

number to fourteen, raise the qualification for a director to 10,000*l.* original stock, and their salaries to 600*l. per* annum; on this plan the direction of your affairs would become an object worthy of being courted by men of the moſt diſtinguiſhed characters, abilities, and property; which, the preſent great importance of this company loudly calls to be at their head— men who would not be ſhackled by their neceſſary attention to their own little concerns, and thereby obliged to abandon thoſe of the company to the conduct and diſpoſal of one, two, or three members of their body, which unhappily has been the fate of this company from it's firſt inſtitution.

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